

The Educational Roots of Henry Moore's Public Works, 1938-1950

by Robert James Sutton

History of Art, University of York

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## Abstract

Between 1938 and 1950, Henry Moore worked on four public commissions for four widely divergent educational establishments, each one representing a different strand of educational provision as it existed in Britain in the years either side of the Second World War. The first commission was for a series of reliefs to decorate the side of the Senate House building at the heart of the University of London's new Bloomsbury campus. It was commissioned by the campus' architect Charles Holden who had provided Moore with his first public commission a decade earlier. The second was for a sculpture to populate the front of a revolutionary new 'Village College' in Cambridgeshire devised by the educationalist Henry Morris and designed by the architects Walter Gropius and Maxwell Fry. Neither of these commissions came to fruition, but the extent and the significance of Moore's preparatory works produced towards them demand more attention than they have received to date.

Moore's work towards a sculpture depicting a 'family group' for the Impington Village College would ultimately come to resolution for the Barclay School in Stevenage, one of the first Secondary Modern schools built in England after the war and the implementation of the 1944 Education Act. Finally, whilst working on these two interlinked commissions in the months immediately following the end of war, Moore produced a reclining figure in stone for the grounds of the Dartington School, an experimental and independent co-educational college in Devon set up by the philanthropic educationalists Dorothy and Leonard Elmhirst.

With this thesis I will explore the significance of this series of public commissions and the figures who commissioned them in the context of educational and cultural reform as it was planned for and implemented in these years. Each of Moore's resultant drawings and sculptures speak directly of and to the moments and the meanings of their inception, their forms representative of both his attitude to the potentiality of public art and the extent of his visual vocabulary, traceable through the nexus of Moore's experience of education as it developed in the first half of the twentieth century.

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This thesis is dedicated to them and to everyone that believes in the promise of comprehensive education and hopes for a day when the marketization of education is rendered aberrant, and when children and adults alike have access to the very best education available as a fundamental right, not a privilege.

### Declaration

I hereby confirm that all the work in this thesis is the author's own and has not been submitted at any other institution or published anywhere else.

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From C.G. Stillman and R. Castle Cleary, *The Modern School* (The Architectural Press, London, 1949), p 132
- Fig.108 *Atom Piece/Nuclear Energy*, 1964-66, LH526  
Bronze, H: 366cm  
University of Chicago  
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- Fig.109 Detail from *Family Group*, 1948-49, LH269  
Tate

Fig.110 Photograph of *Family Group* in situ from the *Daily Express*, 26 September 1950  
Henry Moore Foundation Archive

Fig.111 *Ideas for Sculpture: Studies for 'Two Forms' and 'Carving'*, 1934-35, HMF1135r  
Pencil, 19.7 x 17.8cm  
Art Gallery of Ontario  
From Garrould, *Henry Moore: Volume 2*, p.132

Fig.112 *Ideas for Sculpture: Study for 'Mother and Child' Sculpture*, 1934-35, HMF1135v  
Pencil, 19.7 x 17.8cm  
Art Gallery of Ontario  
From Garrould, *Henry Moore: Volume 2*, p.132



## Introduction

Between 1938 and 1950, Henry Moore worked on four public commissions for four widely divergent educational establishments, each one representing a different strand of educational provision as it existed in Britain in the years either side of the Second World War. The first commission was for a series of reliefs to decorate the side of the Senate House building at the heart of the University of London's new Bloomsbury campus. It was commissioned by the campus' architect Charles Holden who had provided Moore with his first public commission a decade earlier. The second was for a sculpture to populate the front of a revolutionary new 'Village College' in Cambridgeshire devised by the educationalist Henry Morris and designed by the architects Walter Gropius and Maxwell Fry. Neither of these commissions came to fruition, but the extent and the significance of Moore's preparatory works produced towards them demand more attention than they have previously received.

Moore's work towards a sculpture depicting a 'family group' for the Impington Village College would ultimately come to resolution for the Barclay School in Stevenage, one of the first Secondary Modern schools built in England after the war and the implementation of the 1944 Education Act. Finally, whilst working on these two interlinked commissions in the months immediately following the end of war, Moore produced a reclining figure in stone for the grounds of the Dartington School, an experimental and independent co-educational college in Devon set up by the philanthropic educationalists Dorothy and Leonard Elmhirst.

With this thesis I will explore the significance of this series of public commissions and the figures who commissioned them in the context of educational and cultural reform as it was planned for and implemented in these years. Each of Moore's resultant drawings and sculptures speak directly of and to the moments and the meanings of their inception, their forms representative of both his attitude to the potentiality of public art and the extent of his visual vocabulary.

In particular, I am interested in the way Moore's work towards the commissions demonstrates his feelings for the place of art in the public sphere. This in part is directed by the questions asked by Cher Krause Knight in her introduction to a recent book concerned with defining public art. Two particularly relevant questions asked go as follows:

Is public art's responsibility "to communicate with the public"? To do so, must it transcend an artist's private or aesthetic concerns, and "generate human reaction" from a larger audience?<sup>1</sup>

Krause Knight goes on quote the public arts administrator Jerry Allen to begin to define the nature of the audience(s) for public art.

He queries: "Can substantially fewer than everybody be the audience for public art without destroying the public character of the art?" Allen concludes that since public art is "broad and heterogeneous," speaking to wide though not necessarily large and generalized audiences, it would be best to define a "new public" for each work.<sup>2</sup>

Throughout this thesis I seek to define the nature of the audiences for which Moore's works were intended and his apparent concern for their interests. The specificities of those audiences are central to my enquiries, with the educational environments in question representative of the breadth of educational provision as it existed and changed in this period.

More broadly, I am interested in the way Moore's development of style and form at this time was developmental, incremental, and learnt: demonstrative of the extent of his own (visual) education, and traceable through his access to imagery in visual cultural terms, as well as readable, resultantly, in semiotic terms. These referents are obvious in the early part of Moore's career, the "exercises... in various styles" with which Sir William Rothenstein characterised his working processes in the twenties.<sup>3</sup> But it is the depth and breadth of their presence, their simultaneous presentation, palimpsest-like, in works of the

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<sup>1</sup> Cher Krause Knight, *Public Art: Theory, Practice and Populism* (Blackwell Publishing, Oxford, 2008), p.viii

<sup>2</sup> Knight, *Public Art*, pp.viii-ix; quoting Jerry Allen, "How Art Becomes Public" in Jeffrey L. Cruikshank (ed.), *Going Public: A Field Guide to Developments in Art in Public Places* (Arts Extension Service / Visual Art Programme of the National Endowment for the Arts, Amherst, 1988), pp.246-251. Knight's introduction to this informative book synthesises various approaches to the public arts which have been put forward in recent historicism, the majority of which is concerned with public arts in the United States. Recent investigations into the public sculpture in Britain, however, have tended to centre around efforts to record and catalogue public sculpture, largely without critique. The most significant example of this is the work of Public Monuments and Sculpture Association. More recently, the research project 'Mapping the Practice and Profession of Sculpture in Britain and Ireland 1851-1951' has provided an excellent base on which research in the field might develop subsequently, and I believe this thesis offers a tentative step in the proposed direction.

<sup>3</sup> Quoted in Peter Fuller, *Henry Moore: An Interpretation* (Methuen, London, 1993), p.28

'40s that needs uncovering. That is, the simultaneous presence of stylistic gestures towards realism, classicism, surrealism and neo-romanticism.<sup>4</sup> The variety of suggestions that each of these labels should connote might stand in for a fuller explanation of this idea for now.

In order to define this context for the thesis, it will open with a chapter on Moore's education. His personal involvement with education was a significant and lengthy one, having been taught, and having taught others both in and out of art schools throughout his career. Moore was a student at Leeds and the Royal College of Art for the first half of the '20s, on both occasions with the support of a scholarship, before finding employment as a tutor until the outbreak of the Second World War, first at the RCA, then at the Chelsea Schools of Art, after which he worked with assistants in his studio for much of his career. The first of these, Bernard Meadows, was introduced to Moore in 1936 and began assisting him soon after in-between pursuing his own studies.<sup>5</sup> The intention here is to demonstrate the significance of educational opportunity and circumstance in defining the development of Moore's career, and to trace the development of his artistic sensibilities through the institutions, individuals and opportunities that supported it.

If this chapter appears relatively straightforward and biographical, it is intended as such, as both a continuation of and as a riposte to trends in the literature on Moore that have frequently repeated these facts without purpose or elaboration. I believe the facts presented here are necessary as an introduction to understanding the significance of Moore's turn to educational commissions subsequently, and to locating his belief in the value of education.

Similarly important for conceptualising Moore's public voice is a reading of his involvement in a series of noteworthy public exhibitions and his participation in the expanding fields of visual cultures through both print and, increasingly, technological means. Moore's writings for the BBC's in-house magazine *The Listener* provide an important point of reference for defining his relation to the public sphere, and in the years following this thesis' conclusion, Moore's appearance on television was an indicator of his continuing interest in and

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<sup>4</sup> See James Hyman, *The Battle for Realism* (Yale University Press, London, 2001), p.91; Roger Cardinal, *Henry Moore: In the Light of Greece*, exhibition (Basil and Elise Goulandris Foundation, Museum of Modern Art, Andros, Greece, 2000); Peter Fuller, "Henry Moore: An English Romantic" in Susan Compton (ed.), *Henry Moore*, exhibition (Royal Academy, London, 1988), p.41

<sup>5</sup> Roger Berthoud wrote: "It was by far Henry's most enduring relationship with another artist, lasting with only a few gaps for the rest of his life". "For Meadows it was a matchless education, and one which led ultimately to him becoming professor of sculpture at the Royal College of Art... and a well-known artist in his own right." Roger Berthoud, *The Life of Henry Moore* (Giles de la Mare, London, 2003), pp.145-146

recourse to advancements in the availability and the diffusion of culture.<sup>6</sup> This would be central to the ways in which Moore's name would be disseminated into the public consciousness in the years following this thesis's conclusion.<sup>7</sup>

Of equal significance were Moore's professional and personal relationships with significant people in the field of pedagogical and cultural advancement, many of whom played a fundamental part in theorising and implementing structural changes in society. The influence of these figures, both politically and academically, has been discussed at some length in broader histories of the period, but insufficiently in relation to Moore. The careers of these figures and their relation to Moore guide this thesis. What's more, the close relations of these figures to one another will come to illustrate the proximity of Moore to a field of influence intrinsic to the reconstruction of the educational and cultural spheres at mid-century. These figures include art critics, educators and educationalists, publishers, gallery directors and college principals, designers, architects and town planners.

In order to approach this broad subject in a clear and purposeful manner, I have divided the main body of the thesis into two broad sections, separating the discussion into two complementary and interrelated areas that serve to designate two strands of thought I wish to pursue.

In the first of these sections – titled 'On the Erudite Origins of Moore's Wartime Mothers' – I will present a close reading of Moore's formal development in relation to his access to visual cultures, tracing Moore's reformulation of the mother and child theme towards works for the public sphere, and in the context of war. Over three chapters, concerned respectively with Moore's work on the University of London commission, his *Shelter Drawings* produced for the war effort in 1940-41 and his commission to sculpt a Madonna and Child for a church in Northampton in 1943, I will look closely at the gradual re-orientation of Moore's approach to this subject matter in light of his apparent thinking about the pertinence of the mother and child as a metaphor for both the idea of education and its consequence.

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<sup>6</sup> Hajkowski has described *the Listener* appropriately as an "underutilised resource for the study of national identity in Britain." Thomas Hajkowski, *The BBC and National Identity in Britain, 1922-1953* (Manchester University Press, Manchester, 2010), p.10. Moore's first televisual appearance came in 1951 in a programme made by Herbert Read's son, John. It was one of the first monographic treatments of an artist on terrestrial British television. This and the entirety of the BBC's archive of programme's on Moore are now available online at <http://www.bbc.co.uk/archive/henrymoore/8801.shtml>, last accessed 8th September 2014.

<sup>7</sup> A useful timeline of Moore's career can be found towards the back of Christa Lichtenstern's extensive treatment of Moore's artistic practice, Christa Lichtenstern, *Henry Moore: Work – Theory – Impact* (Royal Academy Editions, London, 2008), pp.404-418

In the second section – titled ‘From the Village College to the Secondary Modern: Locating Moore’s *Family Group*’ – I will focus more deliberately on the context for his three most focused educational commissions – Impington, Dartington and Barclay – locating Moore’s close involvement with, and investment in, the field of educational and cultural change as it was conceptualised and implemented in Britain in the years either side of the war. That is, from just prior to the war through to the conclusion of the first post-war Labour government that set in motion the foundation of what has become popularly known as the Welfare State.<sup>8</sup>

In defining the parameters of the discussion in relation to the dates of the works to be discussed, I have also purposefully set out to trace the development of Moore’s career across the unassailable divide of the Second World War, making transparent the incremental nature of Moore’s development. In doing so, however, I will approach the works discussed here in distinction from what was produced both before and after in Moore’s long career, locating this period of Moore’s career as a hinterland of sorts, caught – or lost – between the erstwhile abstractions of ‘pre-’ and ‘post-war’, and between the contrasting colours of ‘modernism’ as defined *by* those abstractions. That is not to say that the works produced in this period were, or remain, distinct from the broader trajectory of Moore’s career. Rather, I will identify the way Moore’s efforts in these years represent a gradual reorientation in his artistic approach, directed by the shifting socio-political and cultural context.

In 1952, after the erstwhile culmination of the period in question, Moore defined the uncertain nature of that period thus, in an important talk concerned with addressing the place of ‘the sculptor in modern society’ delivered to a conference organised by UNESCO:

We have a society which is fragmented, authority which resides in no certain place and our function as artists is what we make it by our own individual efforts. We live in a transitional age, between one economic structure of society which is in dissolution and another economic order of society which has not yet taken definite shape... we are individuals seeking patronage, sometimes from another individual, sometimes from an organisation of individuals—a public corporation, a museum,

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<sup>8</sup> For representative cultural histories of Britain in this period see Paul Addison and Harriet Jones (ed.), *A Companion to Contemporary Britain, 1939-2000* (Blackwell, Oxford, 2005); Jim Fyfe (ed.), *Labour’s Promised Land?: Culture and Society in Labour Britain 1945-1951* (Lawrence & Wishart, London, 1995); Robert Hewison, *Culture & Consensus: England, Art and Politics Since 1940* (Methuen, London, 1995); Arthur Marwick, *Culture in Britain Since 1945* (Blackwell, Oxford, 1994); Ross McKibbin, *Classes and Culture: England 1918-1951: A Study of a Democratic Society* (Oxford University Press, New York, 1998); David Peters Corbett, Ysanne Holt and Fiona Russell, (ed.), *The Geographies of Englishness: Landscape and the National Past 1880-1940* (Yale University Press, London, 2002)

an educational authority—sometimes from the State itself. This very diversity of patronage requires... an adaptability or agility that was not required of the artist in a unified society.<sup>9</sup>

Underlying this thesis is Moore's implicit acknowledgement of and response to this shifting context for his work, and his considered responses to those changing infrastructures directing his work.

I have chosen to focus on Moore's public works from this period in order to focus on the shift in Moore's working practice at this time, and the resulting works' relation to a period in which the promise of 'the market's' provision failed, replaced by civic and state spending in a way which, for a brief moment, allowed for a realignment of the Modernist lingua franca in Britain, geared towards and informed by a newly conceived and constructed audience. I will discuss the ways in which this formulation of a new audience for art and culture during wartime and afterwards might be considered in relation to the broader historical push towards the democratisation of society, and the role of Moore and his circles of influence in designing and implementing that social change. Moore's public works will be used as a test case for this discussion, read through and alongside a rendition of the longer historical trends which informed the reorientation of both artistic and political endeavour in these years.

To re-approach Moore's public works of the period with an eye to the way they relate to and interact with both their surroundings and the background to their commissions is to remove them temporarily from those art histories concerned with either of those pre- or post-war conceptions of Modernist intentionality (variations on the politically or formally evolutionary or revolutionary) and instead position them within, first, a social history that helps to explain their public presence and purpose, and second, a broader art history which might better account for their artistic significance.

Central to this approach must be an appreciation of the considered place of art in the public sphere as theorised before the war, enacted during the war and implemented after the war in tandem with the broader social reconstruction of which the 'welfare state' has become the catch-all term. I will present a reading of the ways Moore came to public prominence in

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<sup>9</sup> Henry Moore, "The Sculptor in Modern Society", *The Artist in Modern Society: Essays and Statements Collected by UNESCO* (UNESCO, Paris, 1954), p.98. The conference set out to identify "the contributions which creative artists can make towards UNESCO's purposes" and "to ascertain what social, economic and political influences now interfere with the performance of the artist's function; the measures that have been or can be taken to remove or lessen these hindrances; and the means whereby the working conditions of the artist can be improved and his freedom assured". *The Artist in Modern Society*, p.7

these years through a rendition of both his active role in the dialogues preceding and directing social change, and the suitability of his public sculptures as representations of the shape of social change. Moore's work in the public domain during this period will thus be received and identified as manifestations of his varying response to the shifting order of that time, and reflective of a broader socio-cultural trend towards reconstruction anticipated and desired in the '30s before it was rendered inevitable and necessary as a result of the Second World War.

Two distinct chapters in the history of British modernism serve as erstwhile bookends for the discussion contained within. In 1937, Ben Nicholson, Naum Gabo and Leslie Martin edited a volume of essays concerned with defining and unifying avant-garde thinking about the place of art and design in relation to contemporary society and social theory. It was titled *Circle: An International Survey of Constructive Art*, and its contents – divided into sections on 'painting', 'sculpture', 'architecture' and 'art and life' – provide a useful point of departure for conceptualising the state of avant-garde thought in Britain at the end of the '30s of which Moore was a part.<sup>10</sup>

In the introduction to the volume, Gabo defined the publication's ambitions thus:

The Constructive idea is not a programmatic one... nor a rebellious demonstration of an artistic sect; it is a general concept of the world, or better, a spiritual state of a generation, an ideology caused by life, bound up with it and directed to influence its course...

The basis of the Constructive idea in Art lies in an entirely new approach to the nature of Art and its function in life. In it lies a complete reconstruction of the means in the different domains of Art, in the relations between them, in their methods and in their aims. It embraces those two fundamental elements on which Art is built up, namely, the Content and the Form. These two elements are from the Constructive point of view one and the same thing.<sup>11</sup>

The attested lack of anything 'programmatic' in the survey's approach helps to account for what is a frequently contradictory collection of essays. But the invocation of the ideas of reconstruction, of socially-mediated practice, and of the centrality of the relationship between content and form are pertinent signposts for both the state of thinking contained within and, more particularly, the context for Moore's thinking at the end of the '30s. I will

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<sup>10</sup> J.L. Martin, Ben Nicholson and N. Gabo (ed.), *Circle: International Survey of Constructive Art* (Faber and Faber Limited, London, 1937)

<sup>11</sup> Naum Gabo, "The Constructive Idea in Art" in *Circle*, p.6

turn to the contents of *Circle* throughout the thesis as a measure of the immediate context from which Moore's career in these years developed.

At the end of this period, meanwhile, and after the conclusion of this thesis, was the Festival of Britain, organised to mark the centenary of the Great Exhibition and intended as a "great symbol of national regeneration", as an avowal of Britain's "bright, dynamic future", and as respite in an age of austerity.<sup>12</sup> Becky Conekin had noted the significance of the Festival as an extension of the post-war Labour government's ambitions to "set an agenda for the roles of culture and education in the remaking of British society", describing the festival as having "set the broad parameters of a social democratic agenda for a new and modern Britain."<sup>13</sup> She suggested that "the Festival can be read simultaneously as a public celebration and a government-sponsored educational event."<sup>14</sup> The governmental role in providing accessible, and educationally charged culture was instigated during wartime, and in the post-war period found expression in the physical and theoretical reconstruction of society, of which the Festival of Britain was the most grandiose, emphatic example.

Catherine Jolivet, meanwhile, writing on British art in the '50s identified the Festival as "the end of an era... a watershed between the attitudes of two decades and, in many respects, of two generations."<sup>15</sup> Indeed, its installation on the South Bank and throughout the British Isles came after the conclusion of the first post-war Labour government that implemented the reforms around which this thesis is anchored, and just prior to Moore's identification of the 'transitional age' that began in the '50s.

As such, the Festival might be read as an event marking the consolidation, in cultural terms, of many of the battles fought over in the previous fifteen years, and the enshrinement of British Modernism, capital M, as the lingua franca of modern Britain, only for the underlying politics of that moment to be shifted in line with the onset of the Cold War.

The social context of the years between these points thus facilitated, or directed the re-orientation of Moore's artistic trajectory, as his approach to art developed necessarily from one ostensibly concerned with formal experimentation and the ethos of 'truth to materials', geared for the most part towards a small private market of buyers interested in

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<sup>12</sup> The first quote is Herbert Morrison's, the government minister responsible for overseeing the festival. B. Donaghue and G.W. Jones, *Herbert Morrison: Portrait of a Politician* (Weidenfeld & Nicolson, London, 1973); quoted in Hewison, *Culture & Consensus*, pp.56-65

<sup>13</sup> Becky Conekin, *The Autobiography of a Nation: The 1951 Festival of Britain* (Manchester University Press, Manchester, 2003), pp.4-9

<sup>14</sup> *Ibid*, p.4

<sup>15</sup> Catherine Jolivet, *Landscape, Art and Identity in 1950s Britain* (Ashgate, Farnham, 2009), pp.15-16



Modernism, towards a more representational stylistic approach aimed at, and in part funded by, a broader public: the state. That in turn created a new, enlarged market for Moore's art, to be catered for on a grander scale through the means of mass production: in the first instant, through the casting and dissemination of bronze editions made from Moore's maquettes, and increasingly in the form of travelling exhibitions, published volumes and television and radio appearances.<sup>16</sup>

Moore had begun to develop and experiment with means of reproducibility in the late thirties, possibly realising that modelling and casting works in metal might permit him to expand the range of his sculptural possibilities. It might be the circumstances of his commissions and the new demands of a changing market, however, that dictated the extent to which he would come to employ editioning as an option, which in turn would seem to have prefigured his gradual movement away from direct carving towards the almost exclusive use of bronze in his later career.

The apparent legibility of these works, meanwhile, to be considered in opposition to the complexity of the era that birthed them, might perhaps begin to account for their subsequent marginalisation in Moore scholarship until relatively recently. Of particularly adverse influence might have been Charles Harrison's offhand denigration of the broad – if nuanced – movement towards representational style made by Moore and his contemporaries when he wrote:

[I]n fact, for many artists in the late thirties an explicit Romanticism, or rather, at worst, a whimsical revivalism, came increasingly to supplant commitment to modernist development.<sup>17</sup>

It is this question of 'commitment' that continues to tug away at renditions of 'Modernism' and Modernist accomplishment in the early post-war period, but Harrison's argument is undermined by a reluctance to engage with the political ramifications of Moore's 'revivalism', should we call it that. This idea will be developed in the second chapter in relation to his sketches for the University of London commission in order to open up the discussion concerning Moore's subsequent public works and their formal properties, and traced through his work on the *Shelter Drawings* and towards his important *Madonna and Child*.

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<sup>16</sup> The 1940s saw a flurry of books and essay on Moore published, of which the most important was the first volume of what would become Moore's catalogue raisonné, Herbert Read (ed.), *Henry Moore: Sculptures and Drawings* (Lund Humphries and A. Zwemmer, London, 1944). For full details of other publications see *Henry Moore Bibliography, Vol. 1-5* (Henry Moore Foundation, Much Hadham, Hertfordshire, 1992)

<sup>17</sup> Charles Harrison, *English Art and Modernism 1900-1939* (Allen Lane, London, 1981)p. 319

In another essay of 1995, Harrison affectively denounced the majority of writings on Moore to that point when he declared that an essay on Moore written in 1935 by his friend Geoffrey Grigson had adequately summed-up “most of what the multitude of that sculptor’s admirers have been able to offer to this day.”<sup>18</sup> Grigson described Moore as a

multiform inventive-artist, abstraction-surrealist nearly in control... a constructor of images between the conscious and the unconscious and between what we perceive and what we project emotionally into the objects of our world... the one English sculptor of large, imaginative power, of which he is almost the master.<sup>19</sup>

It is a description still well-suited to accounting for the complexity of Moore’s work and its divergence throughout his career, and not just until the end of the ‘30s as Harrison would have it. Thankfully, in the intervening years since Harrison’s denunciation, efforts have been made to remedy that relative lack in the art histories of Moore, and particularly with regard to his work in the years of my investigation.

Jane Beckett and Fiona Russell employed Grigson’s conception of Moore in order to approach “the contradictory nature of Moore’s relationship with the modern.”<sup>20</sup> That broad subject area provides the context for much of what was presented in the volume they were introducing, a collection of *Critical Essays* on Moore.<sup>21</sup> The essays contained therein largely relate to Moore’s work from the middle period of his career, crossing that unassailable terrain of the war, and present a wide spectrum of thought concerning the development of Moore as an artist and as a political and a public figure.<sup>22</sup> As such, they have provided a valuable impetus for the direction of my argument.<sup>23</sup>

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<sup>18</sup> Harrison, “England’s Climate” in Brian Allen, (ed.), *Towards a Modern Art World* (Yale, London, 1995), pp.207-225

<sup>19</sup> Geoffrey Grigson, “Comment on England”, *Axis*, No. 1, January 1935, pp.8-10; quoted in Charles Harrison, *English Art and Modernism*, p.278

<sup>20</sup> Jane Beckett and Fiona Russell (ed.), *Henry Moore: Critical Essays* (Ashgate, Aldershot, 2003). The papers were the result of conference at the University of East Anglia in December 1998 entitled *Place-Body-Script: Contemporary Views on Henry Moore*.

<sup>21</sup> Beckett and Russell, *Henry Moore: Critical Essays*

<sup>22</sup> “The essays move away from, or reposition, canonical pieces, to offer readings of the diverse historical, economic and cultural conditions in which Moore’s sculpture was produced and circulated and to consider the kinds of ideological work which the sculptural pieces perform.” Beckett and Russell (ed.), *Henry Moore: Critical Essays*, p.2

<sup>23</sup> I have also been encouraged by the ideas presented at a session on Moore that I co-chaired with Alice Correia at the 2013 AAH Conference, though it appears significant that those texts engaged, for the most part, with Moore’s work in the period following my investigation, as though scholarship on Moore is moving incrementally forwards and slowly thinking about Moore’s largely under-explored later career. The titles of the papers delivered at our 2013 AAH conference entitled “Henry Moore: Sculptural Process and Public Identity Reconsidered” can be read at <http://www.aah.org.uk/annual-conference/2013-conference/session6>, last accessed 8<sup>th</sup> August 2014

Curtis and Russell's essay from the collection proposed connections between Moore's post-war works and an idiomatic British landscape postulated as something historically loaded and nationalistically resonant, picking up on and challenging the line of thought which has sought to locate, or account for the *Englishness* of Moore and his contemporaries' work in the post-war period.<sup>24</sup> Robert Burstow's essay, similarly, discusses the ideologically and politically motivated display of Moore's works out of doors in this period in the context of the open-air sculpture exhibitions which Moore frequently exhibited at.<sup>25</sup> Both essays pick up on the importance of landscape and the outdoors to Moore's work, as he professed himself in his 1937 article, 'The Sculptor Speaks', published in *The Listener*.

I find sculpture [in the open air] more natural than in a London studio, but it needs bigger dimensions. A large piece of stone or wood placed almost anywhere at random in a field, orchard or garden immediately looks right and inspiring... If practical considerations allowed me, cost of materials, transport etc., I should like to work on large carvings more often than I do. The average in-between size does not disconnect an idea enough from prosaic everyday life. The very small or the very big takes on an added size emotion.<sup>26</sup>

And though the outdoor sculpture exhibitions of which Burstow writes were certainly noteworthy, spearheading a whole movement towards the creation of outdoor sculpture parks internationally that served a democratising agenda in the West, I would argue that it must be the conditions of a work's commission and/or fabrication that dictate historical renditions of its significance, rather than the details of its occasional display. Moore's attestation of the need for 'practical considerations' with regards his work preconfigures the impact that a changing market and, indeed, a changing society would have on his work.

In those terms, Margaret Garlake's essay on Moore's architectural commissions in the years 1938-1957 provided a helpfully broad introduction to the context in which these works came about, whilst her book length treatment of the relation of art to its social context in

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<sup>24</sup> Penelope Curtis and Fiona Russell, "Henry Moore and the Post-War British Landscape: Monuments Ancient and Modern", *Henry Moore: Critical Essays*, pp. 125-141. See also Fuller's discussion of Moore's neo-romanticism and its nationalistic impetus in Fuller, *Henry Moore: An Interpretation*, p.28, and Charles Harrison, "'Englishness' and 'Modernism' Revisited", *Since 1950: Art and its Criticism* (Yale University Press, London, 2009), pp. 99-114

<sup>25</sup> Robert Burstow, "Henry Moore's 'Open-Air' Sculpture: A Modern, Reframing Aesthetic of Sunlight and Air", *Henry Moore: Critical Essays*, pp.143-172; Robert Burstow, *Modern Public Sculpture in 'New Britain', 1945-1953*, Unpublished PhD Thesis, University of Leeds, 2000

<sup>26</sup> Henry Moore, "The Sculptor Speaks", *The Listener*, vol. XVIII, No. 449, 18<sup>th</sup> August 1937, London, pp. 338-340; reproduced in Philip James (ed.), *Henry Moore on Sculpture* (Macdonald, London, 1966), pp. 62-68

the post-war period has also provided me with a useful point of reference.<sup>27</sup> In both, Garlake's rendition of Moore's 'eclecticism' read through his attitude to the public domain succinctly identified the purposivity of Moore's working method in these years.

In another essay concerned with tracing the politics of the '30s avant-garde across the war and into the '60s, Chris Stephens' referred to Moore's bronze *Family Group* as an "icon of the post-war social settlement."<sup>28</sup> It is a significant argument simply put, and without sufficient development. I intend to develop and account for it further throughout the thesis. The roots of that work's development have accounted for much of the thinking behind this thesis, and it is towards an identification of the significance of Moore's *Family* that my argument is fundamentally geared.

The lag between that work's commission and its completion coincided with Moore's first major American exhibitions in 1947-48 and his receipt of the Golden Lion at the 1948 Venice Biennale, all before – and surely contributing to – his de facto enshrinement as the face and form of British humanism, with a series of exhibitions of his work throughout Europe and beyond organised by the British Council presented as embodiments of that 'post-war social settlement' writ large.

Though the work produced for the Barclay School should be registered, in isolation, as his first major bronze work, it was swiftly followed by an edition of four more casts from the same model, three of which, through Moore's New York dealer, Curt Valentin at the Bucholz Gallery, were sold to MOMA, Tate and Nelson D. Rockefeller respectively.<sup>29</sup> What's more, the maquettes for that work would be displayed throughout those shows, frequently representing the most recent of Moore's works, whilst they also represented Moore's turn to the potentiality of editioning as a means to the further dissemination and exhibition of his work which is indistinguishable from its financial implications for Moore.<sup>30</sup>

Here was a public work thoroughly reconciled to the facts of market capitalism, and representative of Moore's subsequent expert negotiation of works produced for the public sphere, sustained by the market for small works which he had made his name through, and

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<sup>27</sup> Margaret Garlake, "Moore's eclecticism: Difference, aesthetic identity and community in the architectural commissions 1938-1958", *Henry Moore: Critical Essays*, pp. 173-193; Margaret Garlake, *New Art New World: British Art in Postwar Society* (Yale University Press, London, 1998)

<sup>28</sup> Chris Stephens, "Henry Moore's Atom Piece: The 1930s generation comes of age", *Henry Moore: Critical Essays*, p. 248

<sup>29</sup> After the initial casting of the Barclay work, an edition of four more copies of the *Family Group* was taken from the same model, three of which were bought by Tate, MOMA and Nelson D. Rockefeller respectively. The fourth is now in the collection of the Norton Simon Museum in Pasadena, California. A further two copies were made much later, one being for the Henry Moore Foundation collection and one now in the collection of the Hakone Open Air Museum in Japan.

<sup>30</sup> The Tate Library has a relatively complete record of British Council exhibition catalogues from this period.

multiplied through the possibilities of reproduction. But the role of *public* art and the inherently political aspect of its creation and its form demands to be considered in terms of their social value. So too do the architectures and the environments that house those works.

On the public aspect of Moore's career, the last major exhibition of Moore's work in America which travelled between Dallas, San Francisco and Washington DC in 2001-2002 was able to offer stimulating accounts of Moore's public presence – for that is how he is most recognisable Stateside – even if critical histories have ignored him.<sup>31</sup> In particular, Dorothy Kosinski's essay succinctly offered 'some reasons for a reputation' as she sought to reconcile Moore's popularity with his artistic agency. Particularly insightful is her suggestion that, in distinction from artists whose name is forged in the domain of artistic endeavour alone, "Moore's popularity was written outside the context of avant-garde criticism."<sup>32</sup> His public renown was enacted just there, in the public domain. She continued:

There are also some elusive personal factors that play a role in removing Moore's work from the ongoing and evolving stream of critical discourse. Those who write about his work have often been extremely partisan, indulgently cataloguing the artist's personal attributes and thus rendering him unassailable or unimpeachable... Perhaps, too, a certain complicity on the artist's part in making his own myth tended to isolate him from the evolving dialogue about modern sculpture."<sup>33</sup>

By tracing Moore's relation to, and participation in a broad discussion about the role of art in Britain, traced across the divide of two eras that are cast in such oppositional terms, and by locating his efforts in their full social context, we might begin to un-write this mythic rendition of Moore.

Such was the emphasis behind the 2010 exhibition of Moore's work at Tate Britain, which the curator, Chris Stephens, described as an attempt to "assert a different Henry Moore: a Moore whose work is darker, edgier and more complex than the familiar Moore, redolent with undertones of morbid and sexual energy."<sup>34</sup>

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<sup>31</sup> Dorothy Kosinski, (ed.), *Henry Moore: Sculpting the 20<sup>th</sup> Century*, exhibition (Yale University Press, New Haven, 2001). Anne Wagner has discussed this problem with relation to the "once-crucial formalist paradigm developed by Clement Greenberg in the 1940s and 1950s, then transformed and revitalized in the influential writings of Rosalind Krauss" in whose writings Moore has been all but ignored. Anne M. Wagner, *Mother Stone: The Vitality of Modern British Sculpture* (Yale University Press, London, 2005), p.12

<sup>32</sup> Kosinski, "Some Reasons for a Reputation", in *Henry Moore: Sculpting the 20<sup>th</sup> Century*, p.21

<sup>33</sup> *Ibid*, pp.21-22

<sup>34</sup> Chris Stephens, "Anything But Gentle: Henry Moore – Modern Sculptor", *Henry Moore*, exhibition (Tate Britain, London, 2010), p.12

Of the exhibition's intention, Stephens wrote:

It is to propose that a major reason for his success in the 1920s and 1930s was that his art spoke of and to the crisis of civilisation that was felt to have followed the Great War... [and] close to the intellectual and political conditions of the moment, to the trauma of one war and the rising anxiety about others, to fresh ideas of the body and sex supported by the new vogue for psychoanalysis. In contrast to the dominant idea of Moore, we propose that he presented the body as abject, erotic, vulnerable, violated and visceral.<sup>35</sup>

Being inescapably an exhibition of Moore's private works, the exhibition all but glossed over the works to be discussed herein, save for Moore's *Shelter Drawings*, produced in the service of the state as war art. Even the Tate's copy of Moore's *Family Group*, cast after the original which Moore produced for the Barclay school and sold to Tate in 1950, was left out of the exhibition as were its related maquettes, also in the Tate collection.<sup>36</sup> They didn't appear to fit the exhibition's agenda. But in David Mellor's essay for the catalogue concerned with defining the *Shelter Drawings* as a "hinge point of his development as an artist" as he "translated the consequences of totalitarian Fascism to dramatic effect", the resonance of Moore's work is presented in resolutely political terms.<sup>37</sup> In tracing the origins of these drawings from Moore's work on the pre-war educational commissions for Senate House and Impington, I will continue this discussion in order to locate the *Shelter Drawings* in relation to an ongoing presentation of Moore's humanist instincts, read in social terms as much as artistic ones.

In the years since that significant exhibition, copies of Moore's bronze *Family Group* have been exhibited in two fascinating exhibitions that sought to trace a broader social context for the British post-war moment, both underwritten by an implicit conception of the meaningfulness of rewriting that history now. In Patrick Kieller's exhibition *The Robinson Institute*, presented in the Duveen Hall of Tate Britain in 2012, the *Family Group* stood amongst Kieller's selection of the cultural paraphernalia of post-war Britain as a totemic

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<sup>35</sup> Ibid

<sup>36</sup> In 1955, looking back at his public works from the previous three decades, Moore noted that, shortly after its purchase, Tate's copy of the *Family Group* "was set up for a time on the lawn by the entrance of the Tate Gallery. I was pleased to see the experiment. It was only a temporary position, and it was interesting to see the drawbacks", continuing, "actually, I prefer it in the large scale gallery of the Tate where it stands now." Henry Moore, "Sculpture in the Open Air – A Talk By Henry Moore on His Sculpture and its Placing in Open-air Sites", manuscript, 1955, *Henry Moore Foundation Archive*. The *Family Group* and its maquettes have since been installed in the two dedicated Henry Moore rooms at Tate Britain as part of the major rehang of 2014.

<sup>37</sup> David Mellor, "'And Oh! The Stench': Spain, The Blitz, Abjection and the Shelter Drawings", *Henry Moore*, exhibition (Tate Britain, London, 2012), pp.52-63

representation of human experience and of the proximity of art and life inculcated at that time.<sup>38</sup> Its floor mounting was a successful realisation of its levelling qualities, able to be confronted on the level, on *our* level.

Another copy of the work was presented similarly in a concurrent exhibition concerned with presenting the regalia of 'Modern British Childhood 1948-2012' at the V&A's Museum of Childhood. There, Moore's *Family Group* stood at the introduction to the display, asked to stand in metonymically for so much of the early post-war period, for the elevation and absorption of modernism into the public and particularly the educational sphere, for the formulation of the nuclear family, and for the belief in the power of art that characterised that brief moment in British history.<sup>39</sup>

That was a partner exhibition of the V&A's major exhibition for the queen's jubilee year, *British Design 1948-2012: Innovation in the Modern Age* where, appropriately, a partner piece to the Barclay School *Family Group*, sculpted for the New Town of Harlow in Hadene stone in 1954-5 and thus outside the remit of this thesis, was also exhibited eloquently.<sup>40</sup> Surrounded by icons of that post-war moment, the work felt actively participatory and poignant. The model of the ziggurats from the University of East Anglia behind it stood in for the extended relationship between modern design and educational provision in the post-war period, whilst just in front of it, sketches and plans for Basil Spence's Coventry Cathedral associated the work subtly with notions of both destruction and of peace and reconciliation that that building, and that city, my home town, represent. There, the work's reproduction allowed its context to expand and extrapolate across the post-war period.

Perhaps the most purposeful and well-reasoned conception of the significance of the context of Moore's public turn, then, was presented in an essay by Julian Stallabrass prior to Harrison, the contents of which have not been expanded upon to any considerably extent. Writing for an exhibition concerned with Moore's development of the mother and child theme, Stallabrass identified the importance of Moore's value as a proponent of the avant-garde but with the potential, and the desire, to speak more publicly:

The post-war period was [...] a time of concern about the status of the family and the well-being of the infant, a time of retrenchment of traditional familial values, and perhaps of an alteration of attitudes towards children. An ideal model of the

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<sup>38</sup> *The Robinson Institute*, exhibition (Tate Britain, London, 2012)

<sup>39</sup> *Modern British Childhood: 1948-2012*, exhibition (V&A Museum of Childhood, London, 2012-13)

<sup>40</sup> *British Design 1948-2012: Innovation in the Modern Age*, exhibition (Victoria and Albert Museum, London, 2012)

family was then required as an educative complement to the government's material measures, and Moore's work was well suited to act as such a model. This was partly because of the general orientation of his style and subject matter: with his apparent humanism, his expression of tragedy, his manifest individuality and his avant-garde credentials (essential to separate his work from the humanism of the socialist-realists) Moore was a convenient figurehead.<sup>41</sup>

These points underline much of what follows, as I seek to engage with the way Moore responded to these questions in the pursuit of works which spoke of both the freedom manifest in Modernistic enterprise and the freedoms afforded through the shape of British democracy as it evolved. But to fully engage with the way this family complemented "the government's material measures" must be done in tandem with a realisation of the works' actual performativity.

Of central concern is that question of the works' apparent legibility, and the extent of their realism. James Hyman has written perhaps the most developed treatment on the subject of the politics of realist form in the post-war period. The variety of its usage, purpose and presentation was vast, and its presence remained endlessly loaded in post-war Europe, with innumerable ramifications on both sides of the political divide. In his treatment of Moore's Family Group Hyman wrote:

Moore's shift from surrealism and abstraction towards more figurative concerns, despite attracting criticism, would be used by supporters to suggest compassionate and empathetic social concerns, prioritising universal subjects such as the family, and the mother and child... [directing] the new resonance it gained after the war as part of a rhetoric of rebuilding Britain.<sup>42</sup>

Here was an artist avowedly left-leaning, producing works to do with and participating in fundamentally leftist social programmes, but in a language neither directly participative of the sort of realism associated with socialist action before the war nor sufficiently adventurous to call itself avant-garde as previously.

The first critic to address Moore's public turn and its intrinsic significance for the development of his career was Herbert Read, long Moore's most vocal supporter. Writing in the introductory essay to what would become the first volume of Moore's catalogue raisonné, published in 1944, Read wrote:

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<sup>41</sup> Julian Stallabrass, "The Mother and Child Theme in the Work of Henry Moore", *Henry Moore: Mutter und Kind/ Mother and Child*, exhibition (Käthe Kollwitz Museum, Cologne, 1992), pp.13-39

<sup>42</sup> Hyman, *The Battle for Realism*, pp.89-90



The sculptor... has always been essentially a public artist. He cannot work in privacy like the poet, or even the painter. Least of all can a sculptor of Henry Moore's scope confine himself to the bibelots which are all that are within reach of the individual patron of our egalitarian age. The sculptor must come out into the open, into the church and the market place, the town hall and the public park; his work must rise majestically above the agora, the assembled people...<sup>43</sup>

His argument was consistent with what was his broader treatment of the artist's social role and significance, but so too was the culmination of that idea, where Read defined Moore's modernist vernacular as one unavailable to an imaginary public, writing:

one must also point out that the people should be worthy of the sculpture. There is a long distance to be travelled before there exists between art and the people that spontaneous give-and-take of inspiration and appreciation which is the fundamental factor in a great period of art.<sup>44</sup>

It was an argument contrary to what was represented by the publication of such a volume when read continuously with the burgeoning presence of Moore in populist publications such as *The Listener* and *Lilliput*, in newspapers, on radio programmes and in public exhibitions geared unambiguously to a mass audience, as was the case with the dissemination of his *Shelter Drawings*. That is, the role of public presentations of art/culture in the education of mass audiences, developing public sensibilities and means of appreciation. Moreover, it flew in the face of Read's own avowals of the important place that art must play in education, as written in a volume of a year prior to the Moore publication, *Education Through Art*.<sup>45</sup>

Throughout this thesis, the writings of Read will be used as a barometer against which to contextualise – and frequently contrast – Moore's work, not only because of the volume of words on Moore written by Read, but also given that they were fast friends and even collaborators. In Read's writings, he sought to articulate a position consistent with what was a deeply individual – and frequently contradictory – anarchism, rooted in the writings of Peter Kropotkin and Mikhail Bakunin but increasingly engendered through his

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<sup>43</sup> Herbert Read, "Introduction", in *Henry Moore: Sculptures and Drawings* (Lund Humphries and A. Zwemmer, London, 1944), pp.xvii-xxxvi

<sup>44</sup> Ibid, p.xxviii; Herbert Read, *Education Through Art* (Faber and Faber, London, 1943; 1967 edition)

<sup>45</sup> Read, *Education Through Art*

simultaneous interests in, and advocacy of, psychiatry and contemporary art.<sup>46</sup> From these quarters appears to have come the particularly significant – and problematic – influences of Jungian individuation and of an institutionally-oriented formalism (Bloomsbury-via-the-V&A), both of which guided his elevation of the artist beyond the confines of his community all while advocating a return to an egalitarian medieval guild system of artistic patronage borrowed directly from Kropotkin. Andrew Causey explains this confusion as the result of Read’s concern with the polarities of ‘romanticism and classicism... the personal and the collective, freedom and order, logic and intuition.’<sup>47</sup> I would suggest, rather, it was the result of his attempts to shoehorn his political sensibilities into writings on art, artists and ideas that were never quite stable enough to be treated thus, and onto artists he had a fundamental dissimilarity to, as was the case with Moore. If, for Read, this contradiction of his allegiances placed him like “a circus rider with his feet planted astride two horses” (he was speaking about his duplicitous involvement with, and theorisation of, both the constructivist and surrealist artistic sects at that time), for Moore the distinctions – and his allegiances – were less significant.<sup>48</sup>

The violent quarrel between the abstractionists and the surrealists seems to me quite unnecessary. All good art has contained both abstract and surrealist elements, just as it has contained both classical and romantic elements – order and surprise, intellect and imagination, conscious and unconscious.<sup>49</sup>

It was the difference between Read’s direct and pronounced critical engagement traced onto a reading of form, and Moore’s oscillatory formal engagements that showcased the unfixedness of his critical engagement. Underlying this thesis’ orientation is my conception of the extent to which Moore has been received subsequently as a result of Read’s influence, and the problems therein. Central to this will be an approach to defining their seemingly oppositional views on the role of the state in the theoretical and, subsequently, physical reconstruction of society, especially once the war had begun, and the potentiality –

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<sup>46</sup> Read edited volumes of both Kropotkin and Jung’s writings for a British audience, and his work on the Kropotkin volume in the late ‘30s and early ‘40s appears to have been particularly impactful on his writing at that time: Herbert Read (ed.), *Kropotkin – Selected Writings* (Freedom Press, London, 1942)

<sup>47</sup> Causey identifies that “Read’s position closely parallels the modernism which Clement Greenberg evolved in 1939-40, putting integrity above popularity, and insisting that art must preserve itself and wait for better times”, a comparison that would have horrified both! Andrew Causey, “Herbert Read and Contemporary Art”, pp.123-144 and David Goodway, “The Politics of Herbert Read”, pp.177-195, both from David Goodway (ed.), *Herbert Read Reassessed* (Liverpool University Press, Liverpool, 1998)

<sup>48</sup> James King, *The Last Modern: A Life of Herbert Read* (Weidenfeld and Nicolson, London, 1990), p.153

<sup>49</sup> Moore, “The Sculptor Speaks”, republished as “Notes on Sculpture”, its heading in Moore’s original notes, in the Herbert Read volume of his collected works published in 1944. Alan Wilkinson (ed.), *Henry Moore: Writings and Conversations* (University of California Press, Berkeley, 2002), p.197.

and need – for change has become apparent. For that broad context is the nexus in which Moore’s turn to public art in the ‘40s makes most sense, and from which it demands to be considered.

Just a year before the war, Read wrote in the introduction to his text on *Poetry and Anarchism*:

In spite of my intellectual pretensions, I am by birth and tradition a peasant. I remain essentially a peasant. I despise the whole industrial epoch – not only the plutocracy which it has raised to power, but also the industrial proletariat which it has drained from the land and proliferated in hovels of indifferent brick. The only class in the community for which I feel any real sympathy is the agricultural class, including the genuine remnants of a landed aristocracy. This perhaps explains my early attraction to Bakunin, Kropotkin, and Tolstoy, who were also of the land, aristocrats and peasants.<sup>50</sup>

That he and Moore have frequently been written of in terms of their shared Yorkshire heritage might be shown, through this statement, to be as misleading as it is. Though the geographic proximity of their upbringing might have been at least part of the basis for their friendship, that is where the commonality ends in socio-political terms. Moore’s heritage was amongst the industrial proletariat, and I believe his sympathies lay with the ‘people’ in a more broadly democratic sense. As such, I will endeavour to propose the ways in which we might reorient our view of Moore having identified his voice in distinction from Read’s, traced instead through his politics as they were rendered in stone, in bronze, in pencil, and through his actions.

Methodologically speaking, then, my argument is guided by a loosely cultural materialist framework inspired, particularly, by two texts; Alan Sinfield’s *Literature, Politics and Culture in Postwar Britain* – to be discussed in the final chapter of the thesis – and Raymond Williams’ *The Long Revolution*.<sup>51</sup> Both staked out the territory that I have drawn upon, identifying the overlaps between art and culture in the social realm and their relations – both active and reactive – to the shape of political discourse and the nature of democracy

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<sup>50</sup> Herbert Read, *Poetry and Anarchism* (Faber and Faber, London, 1938), p.16; quoted in Goodway, “The Politics of Herbert Read”, p.181. Goodway locates this quote in relation to Read’s first politics, a “romantic, Disraelian Toryism”, and the ultimate compromise of his politics in his acceptance of a knighthood, for which he was roundly scorned.

<sup>51</sup> Alan Sinfield, *Literature, Politics and Culture in Postwar Britain* (Continuum, London, 2004); Raymond Williams, *The Long Revolution* (Penguin Books, Harmondsworth, 1975)

as it was fought for, in which education was always the most potent expression of progress. As Williams wrote,

There are clear and obvious connexions between the quality of a culture and the quality of its system of education...

It is not only that the way in which education is organized can be seen to express, consciously and unconsciously, the wider organisation of a culture and a society, so that what had been thought of as a simple distribution is in fact an active shaping to particular social ends. It is also that the content of education, which is subject to great historical variation, again expresses, again both consciously and unconsciously, certain basic elements in the culture, what is thought of as 'an education' being in fact a particular selection, a particular set of emphases and omissions.<sup>52</sup>

A guiding principle behind the development of this thesis was an attempt to recognise what universal education, written alongside universal health care and social insurance, meant in the development of British postwar society, and what an art tuned in to that narrative might mean. By reading Moore's development through and alongside the advances in educational opportunities in the twentieth century, I have hoped to recover something of the force of the moments of my enquiry, and to appreciate the importance of education as a means to social empowerment. I believe Moore's educational commissions of the '40s speak eloquently of that moment, of his experience of that moment and the context in which it came to be, and the 'conscious and unconscious' 'emphases and omissions' that directed educational planning.

As such, more than the *content* of education as it was proposed and delivered after 1944, which was inherently problematic and a product of those 'emphases and omissions', this thesis is concerned with the *context* – both social and physical – in which art and education came together in the (re)construction of the educational sphere geared towards the provision of a democratic space representative of the promise of those educational reforms.

That is where I will situate Moore's *Family Group*, finally, having worked through Moore's negotiation of form and content to arrive at a work eminently suited to speaking of that context, being a product of the reforms, the social advances, and the discussions that built towards its commission. This thesis is about that history.

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<sup>52</sup> Williams, *The Long Revolution*, p.145

## **1. Educating Henry**

Henry Spencer Moore was born in the penultimate year of the nineteenth century, 1898.<sup>53</sup> The world was changing; nationalities, national boundaries and empires in transition, technologies of production, transportation and communication evolving at an astonishing rate, and, as the twentieth century commenced, competing political ideologies vied to proclaim their own vision for the future of the world.<sup>54</sup>

Both G. R. Searle and Jose Harris' important studies of the late Victorian and Edwardian eras have deftly illustrated the extent to which England and Britain evolved socially and politically in the decades before the outbreak of the Great War, supporting the view that it was the turmoil and tumult of these years, rather than The Great War, which ushered in the Twentieth Century.<sup>55</sup> The rise of the organized labour movement, the extension of legislative reforms to confer upon women autonomous legal rights – that is, outside of, or in lieu of marriage<sup>56</sup> – and the implementation of state education beginning with the 1870 Forster Education Act all served to facilitate the gradual democratisation of British society, as increasing numbers of educational and professional opportunities became available for both women and for those classes of society previously disenfranchised.<sup>57</sup>

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<sup>53</sup> Angel Smith and Emma Dávila-Cox have identified 1898 as the year that “inaugurated the twentieth-century” as a result of the shifts in international relations resulting from the Hispanic-American War. Angel Smith and Emma Dávila-Cox, *The Crisis of 1898: Colonial Redistribution and Nationalist Mobilization* (Macmillan, Basingstoke, 1999), p.15.

<sup>54</sup> For the cultural context of Britain and indeed the wider world at the Fin-de-Siècle I have for the most part turned to Eric Hobsbawm, *The Age of Empire: 1875-1914* (Weidenfeld and Nicolson, London, 2000); John Carey, *The Intellectuals and the Masses: Pride and Prejudice Among the Literary Intelligentsia 1880-1939* (Faber and Faber, London, 1992); Holbrook Jackson, *The Eighteen Nineties: A Review of Art and Ideas at the End of the Nineteenth Century* (Jonathan Cape, London, 1931 edition); and Gail Marshall (ed.), *The Cambridge Companion to the Fin de Siècle* (Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 2007).

<sup>55</sup> For social and political histories of England in this period, I have found two comprehensive editions particularly useful. G. R. Searle, *A New England? Peace and War 1886-1918* (Oxford University Press, Oxford, 2004) and Jose Harris, *Private Lives, Public Spirit: Britain 1870-1914* (Penguin Books, London, 1994)

<sup>56</sup> Harris, *Private Lives, Public Spirit*, p.24

<sup>57</sup> The Education Act of 1870 introduced, for the first time, state maintained elementary education, though it would only be in the following decades that significant aspects of the policy were upheld, such as the

In an influential study of art and culture in the 1890s, Holbrook Jackson defined the period as one of both decadence and renaissance, with its decadence to be registered in a “perverse and finicking glorification of the fine arts”; a retrogressive formalism which he presents as contrary to the roots of the period’s renaissance. That lay in the “new ideas which sought to find expression in the average national life... demand[ing] a freedom which should give the common man opportunities for the redemption of himself and his kind.”<sup>58</sup> Shearer West has defined this, pace Jackson, as “a transitional point between the rule-bound certainties of Victorian society and the revolutionary ethos of modernism.”<sup>59</sup>

Tracing the social roots of that cultural shift, John Carey has suggested that the most fundamental and significant factor impacting the lives of Britons at the fin-de-siècle came as a result of the educational legislation which introduced universal elementary education for the first time, leading to significant advances in the literacy of the population. He writes:

The difference between the nineteenth-century mob and the twentieth-century mass is literacy. For the first time, a huge literate public had come into being, and consequently every aspect of the production and dissemination of the printed text became subject to revolution.<sup>60</sup>

This context informs something of the spirit of this chapter, and the reading of Moore’s development that follows is grounded in my understanding of the opportunities presented to Moore by dint of the circumstance of his birth.

However, Carey also suggests – this is the focus of his work on the matter – that this shift in the cultural fabric of British life was a major factor in the development of modernist literature and art in the early twentieth century which he describes as a “hostile reaction to the unprecedentedly large reading public” created by those reforms. He argues that the implicit purpose of modernist writing was “to exclude these newly educated (or ‘semi-educated’) readers, and so to preserve the intellectual’s seclusion from the mass.”<sup>61</sup>

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implementation of obligatory attendance for children up to 12 and the raising of the school leaving age. Ernest Green, *Education for a New Society* (George Routledge & Sons Limited, London, 1942), pp.16-18.

<sup>58</sup> Jackson, *The Eighteen Nineties*, pp.19-32

<sup>59</sup> Shearer West, “The Visual Arts” in Gail Marshall (ed.), *The Cambridge Companion to the Fin de Siècle* (Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 2007), p.131

<sup>60</sup> Carey, *The Intellectuals and the Masses*, p.5

<sup>61</sup> Ibid, unpaginated preface. To present the case for the insular turn in the visual arts, Carey turned to the writings of Jose Ortega y Gasset who suggested, in *The Dehumanization of Art*, that modern art acts “like a social agent which segregates from the shapeless mass of the many two difference castes of men.” Jose Ortega y Gasset, *The Dehumanization of Art and Other Essays on Art, Culture and Literature*, trans. Helene Weyl (Princeton University Press, Princeton, 1988); quoted in Carey, *The Intellectuals and the Masses*, p.17

Implicit in Carey's reading of the segregation inherent in both modernist literature and visual art is a cultural bias rooted in class formations. But Moore's background punctuates this suggestion. As such, the overall focus of this thesis on Moore's turn to the public sphere in the '40s is built on a reading of Moore's apparent desire to produce an art representative of and available to that 'semi-educated' audience. (In doing so, I take semi-educated here to mean in the process of being educated, with that process being central to both his development as an artist *and* the enlargement of an audience adequately prepared to respond, to understand and to enjoy it). Throughout, the problem of modernist form and its legibility will be treated as central to Moore's thought process, as will an analysis of the availability of the means to self-improvement that directed Moore's development and that make possible an analysis of the poignancy of his artistic decisions.

In a passionately articulated series of essays on the history of British educational policy and provision from the end of the nineteenth century to its publication in 1942, Ernest Green, then General Secretary of the Workers Educational Association, commented upon the close associations between the extension of democratic accountability and the availability – and nature – of educational opportunity. In doing so, he identified a consequential relationship between political reform and educational reform.<sup>62</sup> As the franchise was extended, so too, eventually, was access to an affordable and ultimately a free education. The Representation of the People Act of 1928 which extended the franchise equally to men and women for the first time, however, would not be complemented by equally progressive educational reform until after the publication of Green's book, when the 1944 Education Act legislated for the provision of free education to everyone up to the age of 15.<sup>63</sup>

If this thesis is concerned primarily with the years either side of 1944, the period in which plans for a better future were formulated, before their necessary enactment after the war in the shape of the Labour Party's implementation of the foundations of the 'Welfare State', it is in the years either side of Moore's birth that it must begin. His educational and personal development would be directly shaped by the circumstances of those years, and his philosophy would be defined, I will argue, by his relation to it. It was a timely birth. In

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<sup>62</sup> The Reform Bills of 1832, 1867 and 1884-85 were followed, respectively, by the First State Grant for Education in 1833, the Forster Education Act of 1870, and the Balfour Education Act of 1902. Later the Representation of the People Acts of 1918 and 1928, the last of which extended the franchise equally, for the first time, to all men and women over 21, were followed by the Fisher Education Act of 1918 and the bill to raise the school leaving age to 15 legislated for in 1936, though unfulfilled until the introduction of the 1944 Education Act. Green, *Education for a New Society*, p.82

<sup>63</sup> That this Act failed, ultimately, to fulfil its promise of equal educational provision has been sustained by much of the subsequent educational decision making in the country, as has been written about most recently in Melissa Benn, *School Wars: The Battle for Britain's Education* (Verso, London, 2011)

this chapter I will present details on the development of educational provision in the United Kingdom with relation to Moore's experience of it, followed by a brief but purposeful history of his broader relationship with the expanding field of education, and the numerous significant characters involved in that process in the years before the thesis proper begins.

Moore was the seventh of eight children born to Mary Baker and her husband Raymond Spencer Moore, a coal-miner in the small industrial town of Castleford, about 15 miles south east of Leeds.<sup>64</sup> It was there that Moore received his formal education, first at the local elementary school and then at Castleford Secondary School having received a county minor scholarship only at the third attempt.<sup>65</sup> Before any of the anecdotes which pepper biographies and histories of Moore's early life, all of which are repeated as significant in his path to art school and a career in the fine arts, I take this single detail as of fundamental importance to the development of his career. Moore's attendance at secondary school was an opportunity which, in the early years of the last century, had considerable ramifications.

State secondary education was only introduced with the Balfour-Morant Education Act of 1902, which also established local education authorities to take control of educational provision at a county level.<sup>66</sup> This Act made state elementary education universally free for the first time, just before Moore began school, and it empowered the new LEAs to build new schools in line with requirement, as a result of which Castleford Secondary School was built between 1903 and 1908.<sup>67</sup> However, the cost of secondary school continued to be prohibitive to many families, though a system of scholarships implemented to support "a very few of the cleverest children in the elementary schools" offered some hope.<sup>68</sup> The *Supplementary Regulations for Secondary Schools in England*, published in 1907, further supported the opening out of opportunity, stipulating that all state-funded schools must provide free school places for at least 25 per cent of its pupils.<sup>69</sup> At the third time of asking,

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<sup>64</sup> Herbert Read, *Henry Moore: A Study of His Life and Work* (Thames and Hudson, London, 1965), p.14. Read's was the earliest attempt at a complete history of Moore's life, at least up to the time of its writing, and is certainly the most analytical of those available. As such, I have turned to it primarily for the facts of Moore's early life, supplemented where necessary by other available biographies.

<sup>65</sup> In an interview with Roger Berthoud in advance of his biography, Moore recalled failing the first time, whilst in discussions with John Hedgecoe he recollected failing twice. Berthoud, *The Life of Henry Moore*, p.27; Henry Moore & John Hedgecoe, *Henry Moore: My Ideas, Inspiration and Life as an Artist* (Collins & Brown Ltd, London, 1999), p. 11

<sup>66</sup> Ernest Green, *Education for a New Society*

<sup>67</sup> The school had opened on temporary premises from 1906, after which some of Moore's siblings has also attended. "School Time", *The Borough of Castleford*, accessed 14<sup>th</sup> January 2013, <http://www.castleford.org/history/cas031.html>.

<sup>68</sup> Green, *Education for a New Society*, p.19

<sup>69</sup> Ivor Morrish, *Education since 1800* (George Allen and Unwin Ltd, London, 1970), pp.25-26, 50-53. The continued existence of a dual system including private and independent, as well as religious schools was a matter of concern for the progressive minority at this stage, but the class interests of the period would ensure



Moore cemented his place among the top percentile of his cohort, following in the footsteps of all his elder siblings by continuing his education.<sup>70</sup>

Harris has referred to this period as one in which the “tentacles of class became all-embracing”, writing

Quite apart from the stratifying impact of property distribution and large-scale machine production, between 1870 and 1914 the organization of work, schools, housing, welfare, culture, and recreation all conspired to compartmentalize British society on class-lines.<sup>71</sup>

Indeed, it might be suggested that the rise and reoccurrence of industrial and direct political action in the latter part of this period suggests that those strata were felt, or understood, particularly closely at that time. And yet it was also the reformed shape and nature of educational opportunity and provision, Harris argues, that made those lines negotiable, with the county council grammar schools among a selection of educational institutions the emergence and impact of which “began a slow process, not of dismantling the class system, but of loosening its bonds for selected individuals”, and most readily so in the “frontier... between the upper-working class and the lower-middle class (a frontier whose limits were greatly enlarged by the growth of teaching, clerical and other tertiary occupations.”<sup>72</sup>

That Moore and three of his other siblings went on to become school teachers is a mark of the navigability of that gap and the importance of education in facilitating that transition, but also of his family’s desire to transgress it.<sup>73</sup> Moore’s training as a school teacher was the direct result of his father’s advice upon learning of Moore’s desire to attend art school, as written by Read:

“You ought to do what you brother has done”, said his father, “get yourself

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that the state system of education would remain only an option, and an ostensibly inferior one, throughout this period. See Green, *Education for a New Society*

<sup>70</sup> In a review of the extension of public education in this period, the former member of Board of Education G. A. N. Lowndes writes of this period: “The odds against an elementary school child obtaining a free secondary education had thus fallen appreciably although the materials for a calculation are not available”, G.A.N. Lowndes, *The Silent Social Revolution: An Account of the Expansion of Public Education in England and Wales 1895-1935* (Oxford University Press, London, 1937), p.109

<sup>71</sup> Harris, *Private Lives, Public Spirit*, pp.6-7

<sup>72</sup> Ibid, pp.8-9. The term ‘county council grammar schools’ is Harris’, and it refers to all the state-funded institutions of academically-oriented secondary education in this period rather than grammar schools as they came to be understood in the context of later 20<sup>th</sup> century educational history.

<sup>73</sup> Berthoud, *The Life of Henry Moore*, p.20

qualified to earn a living, and after that, if you still want to become a sculptor, all right, but first get qualified.”<sup>74</sup>

And though Moore’s experience as a school teacher was only fleeting, in the early years of the war before his eighteenth birthday and then again once the war was over, he would spend the first two decades of his artistic career teaching in art schools before a life spent working with and learning from the numerous assistants that passed through his workshop.<sup>75</sup> This fact is, I contend, central to an understanding of the artist and the man.<sup>76</sup>

Moore’s father, though he left school at the age of nine to work on the land, was, in the words of Moore’s biographer John Russell, a “thoughtful and tenacious individual who would have gone quickly to the top if he had had a chance of formal education.”<sup>77</sup> Raymond Moore’s hope was that his children would succeed where he had not by way of the opportunities then available.<sup>78</sup> This desire was mirrored by one for his own self-improvement, pushing himself through the examinations required for promotion within the coal-mine, first to deputy and then ‘under-manager’, though he was unable to take up the second position due to a problem with his eyes.<sup>79</sup> Moore’s father also taught himself the violin and enough of the basics of geometry and algebra required in order to help Henry and his siblings with their homework, learnt with the assistance of what Herbert Read referred to as “the autodidactic textbooks available in those days.”<sup>80</sup> Indeed, Moore would later claim that his having failed his scholarship exam at the first and second attempt had been the fault of his father’s over-zealous musical ambitions for his son.

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<sup>74</sup> Read, *Henry Moore: A Study*, p. 26

<sup>75</sup> Amongst the many assistants who worked in Moore’s studio can be numbered the sculptors Bernard Meadows, Anthony Caro and Reg Butler. Literature on the importance of Moore’s working relationships with these assistants in his studios has been notable in its absence, and deserves an entire study of its own. A huge amount of anecdotal knowledge exists among those who survive and those who continue to work at the Henry Moore Foundation, some of which was collected for the volume David Mitchinson (ed.), *Celebrating Moore: Works from the Collection of the Henry Moore Foundation* (Lund Humphries, Aldershot, 2006). A full list of Moore’s assistants can be found in Anita Feldman and Malcolm Woodward (ed.), *Henry Moore: Plasters*, exhibition (Henry Moore Foundation, Perry Green, 2011), p. 155

<sup>76</sup> As part of his involvement in the visual arts panel of the *Arts Enquiry*, to be discussed in chapter six, Moore was noted in the minutes as pointing out to the panel that whilst at art school, students had the opportunity to “become qualified, and continue to teach in their own local town and school, and that this point should be brought out”. This note is a telling reminder of both his own experience and his conception of the continued importance of his father’s advice. Minutes of the Visual Arts Group, 2<sup>nd</sup> December 1942, Dartington Hall Trust Archives, T/AAE/2/B/4

<sup>77</sup> John Russell, *Henry Moore* (Penguin, Harmondsworth, 1973), p.13

<sup>78</sup> “He was a conscientious father who wanted his children not to have the suffering, the drawbacks and the restricted life he’d had, and he saw that we didn’t.” Moore to Berthoud November 1983, Berthoud, *The Life of Henry Moore*, p.22

<sup>79</sup> Read, *Henry Moore: A Study*, p.12

<sup>80</sup> *Ibid*, p.11

I said to my father, I've failed because you make me learn the violin – I hated the noise it made – I don't do any homework because I have to do all that practice. So he agreed, I stopped the violin. I failed the exams a second time, but my father said he would give me one last chance to pass or he would make me take up the violin again. I passed on the third attempt and gave up the violin forever.<sup>81</sup>

The breadth of Raymond Moore's desires for his son and indeed himself might thus be relatable to a wider history of designs on self-improvement amongst the middle and working classes in the Victorian era, most famously espoused in, and encouraged by the author and reformer Samuel Smiles' unambiguously titled *Self-Help* of 1858, which amassed and retained huge popularity for decades after.<sup>82</sup> In it, Smiles articulated the importance of hard-work, self-belief, and the desire to push oneself to utilise one's abilities, regardless of class or social status. But his belief in the navigability of class boundaries, and the potential of every man and woman, was very much the product of its era, and as such was grounded in the principles of laissez-faire liberalism which questioned the role of the state in individual matters, the impetus of which was challenged with the late Victorian reforms that brought the role of the state closer to the life of the individual, and nowhere more resonantly than in the domain of learning.<sup>83</sup> These points of discussion have continued to reverberate through debates about the place of the state in relation to education, from the pronouncements on educational planning in the '40s that underpin much of this thesis through to the introduction of 'free schools' and 'academies' into the educational infrastructure at the time of writing.

The shape of Moore's father's desire for his own self-improvement, and of his hopes for his children, seems more likely to have been encouraged and supported by his membership of the Yorkshire Miners Association, of which his friend Herbert Smith was the first president.<sup>84</sup> Moore would recall that meetings in their living room might have been among the earliest of the YMA, and Raymond's political and professional allegiances no doubt introduced him to the thoughts of reformers such as John Ruskin who he in turn introduced to Henry (an influence Peter Fuller has suggested had a significant impact on the

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<sup>81</sup> Moore & Hedgecoe, *Henry Moore*, p.11

<sup>82</sup> Thank you to Dr Jason Edwards for introducing me to this text, and the broader Victorian context of self-improvement amongst the middle and working classes. In his introduction to the centenary edition of the book, the social historian Asa Briggs notes that "Twenty thousand copies were sold in the first year... and nearly a quarter of a million by the end of the nineteenth century," and that in the hundred years after the books first publication, seventy-two different impressions of the book were published. Asa Briggs, "Self-Help: A Centenary Introduction", in Samuel Smiles, *Self-Help* (John Murray, London, 1958), pp.7-31

<sup>83</sup> Harris, *Public Lives, Private Spirit*, pp.17-23

<sup>84</sup> Berthoud, *The Life of Henry Moore*, p.22

development of Moore's attitudes).<sup>85</sup> Though Ruskin's writing was far less amenable for a lay-audience than was the prose of Smiles, the depth and the significance of his political thought was far more impactful on the history of political reform, and his writing on art far more significant for the development of art in this country. That the elder Moore was so impressed by Ruskin might too suggest his own desire for self-improvement above and beyond the lessons of Smiles.

Certainly, Raymond Moore's involvement in the Miners Association would have brought him close to the centre of discussions which led to the sixty-eight week strike over wage levels maintained by miners at the Wheldale Colliery, where he worked, between 1902 and 1904, and would similarly have impacted upon the formulation of his son's politics.<sup>86</sup> That throughout this period Moore's mother and father, struggling for subsistence, continued to insist upon the importance of their children's education is testament to the strength of their belief.

Moore's encounters with the wider cultural world, both geographically and conceptually, began with his education, and his father's conception of self-improvement, like his politics, would have encouraged Moore to see beyond the perimeters of Castleford. But in order to draw out the ways in which Moore was able to develop an aesthetic appreciation located within that broader cultural world, it is important to conceive of the way art education was conceptualised and delivered in the years prior to and during his schooling.

Michael Sadler, who Moore would meet after the war when he began studying at the Leeds School of Art, was one of the most significant educationalists of his day, and one of the most respected. Before taking on the Vice-Chancellorship of Leeds University, Sadler worked for a brief time on the Board of Education for whom he had completed a series of studies on educational provision in different parts of England following the 1902 Balfour Education Act.<sup>87</sup> His report on Huddersfield, and particularly the chapter on 'The Teaching of Art in Huddersfield, and its bearing upon the Trade of the Borough', if not directly applicable to Castleford, is certainly useful in considering an aspect of educational thought regarding the industrial towns of the West Riding.

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<sup>85</sup> Fuller, "Henry Moore: An English Romanic", p.47 n6; also Moore & Hedgecoe, *Henry Moore*, p. 11

<sup>86</sup> Berthoud, *The Life of Henry Moore*, p.22. Moore's pre-war involvement in left-wing politics and possible communist party membership will be discussed further in chapter two

<sup>87</sup> Lowndes notes that the Leeds LEA for one asked explicitly for the Board of Education to inspect them at this time so as to make it clear how under equipped, under staffed and ill-prepared they were to adequately fulfil the expectations of the new statute. Lowndes, *The Silent Social Revolution*, p.108

Of the importance of the study of art and design in towns with strong textile industries – as was the case in Castleford - Sadler writes:

[I]t has been found profitable in great manufacturing centres to make a systematic effort for the improvement of art teaching in all the schools attended by children and young people of the community.

It is not enough to have a School of Art devoted to instruction in drawing and design. The art teaching in all the schools should be so correlated as

- (1) to produce a greater sensitiveness to artistic beauty throughout the masses of the population;
- (2) to stimulate in individual children latent artistic gifts (which may lie undeveloped in the most unexpected quarters), to bring under the notice of the teachers children possessing such gifts, and to secure for them a progressive course of art teaching appropriate for their talent;
- (3) to lead up, with the least waste of effort, to the higher teaching at the School of Art, and to prevent the young people from being taught in their early years methods of work which they would subsequently have to unlearn.<sup>88</sup>

And though these suggestions were still more ideological than pragmatic, they reveal something of an attitude towards the significance of art amongst educationalists, rehearsing and revising the connections between design and industry advanced by the likes of Ruskin and William Morris.

More pertinent to this discussion, however, are the ways in which Sadler's suggestions relate directly to aspects of Moore's own experience of art as they have been written up to now, and the ways in which his ostensible 'natural talent' was nurtured. If Sadler's suggestions were not taken on wholesale, that is not to say that that broader belief in the place of art and aesthetics in education was not taken on intermittently, and Moore certainly profited from a non-typical experience of art education whilst at Castleford.

In the various biographies of Moore, his introduction to art is most often recounted as being the result of one particular teacher, Miss Alice Gostick: "a woman of half-French origin... who was the first to recognize the exceptional nature of her pupils' talents, and

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<sup>88</sup> Michael Sadler, "The Teaching of Art in Huddersfield, and its bearing upon the Trade of the Borough", *Report on Secondary & Technical Education in Huddersfield* (Commissioned by County Borough of Huddersfield Education Committee, printed by Eyre & Spottiswoode, London, 1904), pp.116-118

consistently encouraged their development throughout the decisive years of his education.”<sup>89</sup> Herbert Read has suggested that it was Gostick’s collection of journals and books and her readiness to lend them to her pupils that introduced Moore to the continental avant-gardes in the early twentieth century. More significant for the development of Moore’s career, however, might be the suggestions that it was Gostick who drew Moore and his friends’ attention to the availability of scholarships to get to art school.<sup>90</sup>

Another figure at Castleford Secondary School who is consistently rendered significant is the headmaster, T.R. (Toddy) Dawes, an “unorthodox”, “remarkable” and “exciting” man whose caricature Moore carved into his first sculptural commission, the Roll of Honour for Castleford Secondary School.<sup>91</sup> In biographies of Moore, Dawes’ influence on the sculptor has been limited to the fortune and happenstance of Moore’s having been to his school, with Dawes’ propensity for cultural school outings suggested to have had particular influence on his students, not least Moore. “Of more immediate relevance to young Moore’s burgeoning artistic proclivities was Dawes’ interest in English church architecture”, wrote Roger Berthoud, mentioning the church at Methley explicitly. “Although he may have been familiar from family visits to the church in which his parents had married, it was no doubt Dawes who drew his attention to its finer details”.<sup>92</sup> Indeed, Penelope Curtis and Fiona Russell have recently suggested the importance of the *Monument to Lionel, Lord Welles and his Wife* from Methley church on the conception of Moore’s *Madonna and Child*, the subject of the fourth chapter here.<sup>93</sup>

But any further elaboration on Dawes’ significance has been otherwise absent from histories of Moore’s career save for one book review written by another former Castleford pupil, the author J.L. Carr.

In 1907, this exciting man came from Camarthen to be the Secondary School’s first headmaster. He immediately demanded Extras. A library, a grand piano, and a proper art studio... Then, for the succeeding quarter of a century, he encouraged a

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<sup>89</sup> Read, *Henry Moore: A Study*, p.25

<sup>90</sup> Read also noted as significant that Gostick drew the attention of the Chief Art Inspector of the West Riding to her pupils, perhaps a sign of her impression of them? J. L. Carr, a pupil at Castleford a decade or so after Moore, would recall that ‘succeeding generations were weighed in his balance, and properly found wanting’. Read, *Henry Moore: A Study*, pp.25-26; J. L. Carr, “Mr Dawes and Mr Moore”, *The Spectator*, vol. 256, no. 8231, April 12 1986, p.32

<sup>91</sup> Byron Rogers, *The Last Englishman: The Life of J. L. Carr* (Aurum Press, London, 2003), pp.68-69

<sup>92</sup> Roger Berthoud, *A Life of Henry Moore*, p.29

<sup>93</sup> Curtis and Russell, “Henry Moore and the Post-War British Landscape”, pp.128-131

mildly anarchic society for the preservation and extension of individuality (a doctrine, to this day, savagely put down by most schools).<sup>94</sup>

For the most part, Carr's review ignores the book at which it is ostensibly aimed, a point Carr's biographer took to be a slight on Moore.<sup>95</sup> Instead, Carr, twelve years Moore's junior, used the space of the book review to praise Dawes' impact on their school. This small detail of cultural history and its method of delivery confirms the difference between the mythologies that surround Moore, often perpetrated and indeed perpetuated by himself and others, as well as the alternative histories that might be offered by those wishing to look beyond the mythology. In his promotion of Dawes, Carr was merely honouring the circumstances of Moore's origins as he understood them, and in doing so led a humanity to Moore by way of a shared sense of heritage. He finished his review:

...it may be a sign of the times that this extraordinary man [Dawes], passionately urging resistance to believe only what one is taught to believe, repeating what one has been told to say, doing what we are expected to do, living like clockwork dolls, should be unrecognised, half-forgotten. And unmentioned.<sup>96</sup>

Dawes' absence from histories might just as easily relate to a lack of archival information concerning his impact on Moore, or the simple matter of Gostick having more obviously had a direct impact on Moore's development. Of course, it might also have suited the narratives of Moore's career to trace the importance of a female figure on his development, as a way of implicitly identifying something of the origins of his interest in the female form.

Another often repeated story from Moore's development is of the Sunday school teacher who introduced the young and impressionable Henry to sculpture via a parable of sorts.

Read retold that story as follows:

On one [...] occasion the Superintendent told the story of Michelangelo, 'the greatest sculptor that ever lived'. He described how a sculptor's studio in those days would open on to the street, and how people passing by would stop to comment on the work in progress. On this particular occasion Michelangelo was carving the head of an old faun. A passer-by stopped and watched him for a while. The faun Michelangelo was carving was represented laughing, with all its teeth exposed. The main in the street eventually remarked: 'But you have given the faun

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<sup>94</sup> Carr, "Mr Dawes and Mr Moore", p.32

<sup>95</sup> Rogers, *The Last Englishman*, p.70

<sup>96</sup> Carr, "Mr Dawes and Mr Moore", p.32

all its teeth; an old faun would have lost some of them.' Whereupon the sculptor took his hammer and chisel and knocked out two of the teeth.<sup>97</sup>

The suggestion is always that, as a result of this story, Moore suddenly knew he wanted to be a sculptor. But of equal importance is the implicit equation of Moore with Michelangelo, as though at this young stage the baton was handed down. Similarly, stories of Moore's whittling small objects from wood for use in childhood games, casting objects in modelling clay taken from the neighbouring potteries, or visiting a local rocky outcrop known as the Adel Rock are all omnipresent in biographies of Moore, rendered as momentous moments in the artist's development.<sup>98</sup>

These are the sort of stories preferred by biographers with a tale to tell, historians caught up in the amenability of narrative prose, too many of whom have contributed to the mythologisation of Moore. They all share the same desire to excavate these early signs of Moore's artistic prowess in order to reveal a 'natural' – as opposed to learnt – propensity for sculptural form. But the facts of Moore's education, his having had a series of interesting and interested teachers, and the opportunity to learn in an environment that promised more than its immediate surroundings could offer, less than a decade after secondary education was made potentially available to the children from such a community, appear to me the ones worth commenting upon.

I have intentionally quoted and referenced Read where possible in the previous few pages in order to now draw attention to a contradiction in Read's writing that informs and underpins my direction of thought with this thesis, and which I believe underpins much of the problematic writing on, and readings of Moore that have followed.

In the introduction to Read's important work of 1943, *Education Through Art*, he summarised his understanding of 'the purpose of education' thus:

It is assumed, then, that the general purpose of education is to foster the growth of what is individual in each human being, at the same time harmonizing the individuality thus educated with the organic unity of the social group to which the individual belongs. It will be demonstrated in the pages which follow that in the process *aesthetic education* is fundamental.

This delineation of the place of 'the social group' was the result of Read's desire to hang his ideas on the peg of democratic freedoms. He continues,

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<sup>97</sup> Read, *Henry Moore: A Study*, p.20

<sup>98</sup> Ibid, pp.17-18; Berthoud, *The Life of Henry Moore*, p.27



Education is the fostering of growth, but apart from physical maturation, growth is only made apparent in expression – audible or visible signs and symbols. Education may therefore be defined as the cultivation of modes of expression – it is teaching children and adults how to make sounds, images, movements, tools and utensils. A man who can make such things well is an educated man. If he can make good sounds, he is a good speaker, a good musician, a good poet; if he can make good images, he is a good painter or sculptor... All faculties, of thought, logic, memory, sensibility and intellect, are involved in such processes. And they are all processes which involve art, for art is nothing but the good making of sounds, images, etc. The aim of education is therefore the creation of artists – of people efficient in the various modes of expression.<sup>99</sup>

But Read's choice of the word 'efficient' here is the giveaway to the contradiction I am locating, for this line of reasoning falls down when it comes to Read's conception of those artists to whom he turns in his art criticism; those loaded with the gift of individual genius as it might otherwise be identified; those chosen few who were separated from the masses by dint of their apparent providence, or their unique ability to do what others could not; those who have found their way to a success which was in fact entirely predicated by their time and, frequently, their education.

Writing in his biography of Moore from 1965, Read writes:

Henry Moore's education may be divided into three stages: elementary, secondary and professional. But these words indicate formal categories that tell us nothing about the actual process, which had little to do with categories or curricula, but was rather the direct influence of the places and people with whom the boy and then the youth came into accidental contact. A sculptor, like a poet, is born, not made; and I have already given a few indications of the presence in Henry Moore of an innate plastic sensibility which education might foster but could not create.<sup>100</sup>

The contradiction at the heart of Read's thought process is all contained within that short paragraph, and a direct comparison of Read's suggestions of that which "education might foster" here and in the aforementioned quotes from *Education Through Art* demonstrates the implications of Read's aggrandisement of Moore, and the problem inherent in his denunciation of the 'categories' and 'curricula' of Moore's schooling. Whereas Moore's upbringing, his opportunities, and his ultimate success read *through* his education point to

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<sup>99</sup> Read, *Education Through Art*, pp.5-11

<sup>100</sup> Read, *Henry Moore: A Study*, p.23

the opportunities that learning presented to this young man, the rendition of his success through the prism of inevitability denigrates both those who contributed to his success and the system from which he advanced, all while acknowledging their place.

It was this sort of individualistically oriented direction of thought that provoked the cultural historian Raymond Williams to write Read out of his ostensibly complete history of 'culture', *Culture and Society 1780-1950*, confessing to his hostility to Read in an interview about the book's consequence years later.<sup>101</sup> Indeed, that dichotomy between the individual and their society abounds in the histories and art histories of modernism from which this thesis draws, and though my approach to Moore here is informed by the work of figures like Williams who helped to designate a cultural materialist approach equivalent to my own, it is necessary to navigate between the poles of the social history I am building upon and the intellectual ideas which were impressed upon Moore to locate his attitude to art's potentiality. That is, the ideas to which he was attracted, and the figures alongside whom he developed. It is there that Moore's friendship with Read becomes particularly relevant, the full consequence of which, both personally and theoretically, has hardly been touched upon in the scholarship.

Equally significant and equally undervalued is the broader context of the discussions about cultural and social reform in the '30s to which both Moore and Read were party. It is not incidental that the publication of Read's thesis was coincident with the works by Moore to be considered here, nor that both men moved in similar intellectual circles in the previous years, exposed to and influenced by the same currents of opinion. An appreciation of the pedagogical discussions of which Moore was aware, and the educationalists with whom he associated, as well as the extent of his engagement and interaction with the pedagogical field as it developed in the pre-war period is fundamental to my approach. And if subsequent renditions of Moore have too frequently promoted his isolated genius, it shall be the aim of this thesis to establish a broader contextual argument for why his work might have come to attract such a reading. The facts of his experiences of Art College in the twenties and thirties are thus essential to defining the development of his aesthetic sensibilities.

As the first two years of the Great War were played out, Moore studied for and received the Cambridge Senior Certificate required in order to enter teacher training college, briefly

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<sup>101</sup> Raymond Williams, *Politics and Letters: Interviews with New Left Review* (New Left Books and Verso Editions, London, 1979), p.99; quoted in Michael Paraskos, "Introduction to the Routledge Classics Edition" in Herbert Read, *To Hell With Culture* (Routledge, London, 2002), p.xi

returning to his elementary school as a student teacher before enlisting in 1916 after his eighteenth birthday. It need hardly be ignored that were Moore two years older, he might have been heading to war sooner, where he might have suffered the same fate as his sculptural forebear Henri Gaudier-Brzeska. But what's certain is that his having trained as a school teacher got him out of service sooner. Teachers were some of the first groups to be demobilized after the armistice, and Moore wasted no time in applying for an ex-serviceman's grant to support his application to the Leeds School of Art, which he entered in September 1919.<sup>102</sup>

It was at Leeds that Moore's entrance into the modern world of art began via the collection of Sir Michael Sadler and via the writings of Roger Fry. Indeed, it was Fry who best summed up the significance of Sadler when he wrote (in terms echoing Carr's veneration of Dawes, writ large):

Every time I came to Leeds I got more and more impressed with the work Sir Michael was doing. He had civilised a whole population. The entire spirit had changed from a sullen suspicion of ideas to a genuine enthusiastic intellectual and spiritual life. He showed what *can* be done – but very rarely is – by education.<sup>103</sup>

Again, the circumstances of Moore's schooling brought him into the orbit of figures whose influence on him surely was more than just anecdotal, and whose place in the development of both scholastic and art education in Britain in the earliest twentieth century was unquestionable. On the significance of Moore's access to Sadler's collection as a student, Read wrote:

Sadler had a collection of paintings and sculpture which was quite exceptional for its time – it included not only Constable, Turner, and other English masters, but also African negro sculpture and works by Gauguin, Cézanne, Rouault, Matisse, Segonzac, Friesz, Chirico and Kandinsky... Sir Michael used to invite the students of the College of Art to visit his house and see his collection, and this was Henry

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<sup>102</sup> James Johnson Sweeney, "Henry Moore", *Partisan Review*, New York, March-April 1947, p.182; quoted in Wilkinson, *Henry Moore: Writings and Conversations*, p.41. A more thorough reading of the impact of war on Moore has been attempted elsewhere, usually in psychoanalytic terms. And though it will certainly have been significant on Moore's development, I agree with John Russell's judgement that Moore's recollections of war "are not the words of one marked for life by experiences too dreadful to be set down", though it is certainly worth remarking that out of a battalion of about four hundred, only fifty-two appear to have survived. Russell, *Henry Moore*, p.20; Read, *Henry Moore*, p.28. Of the psychoanalytically aligned renditions of Moore's experience of the First World War, the most useful is Andrew Causey, "Henry Moore and the Uncanny", *Henry Moore: Critical Essays*, pp.81-106

<sup>103</sup> Quoted in Russell, *Henry Moore*, p.21

Moore's first contact with original examples of modern art."<sup>104</sup>

The list reads like a rundown of the points of precedence that would anchor his subsequent development. Here we have 'the British tradition', 'primitive' art and early modernism, thrown together as though part of a logical continuum in the history of art paving the way for Moore's earliest experiments in form. Indeed, Sadler would become one of Moore's earliest patrons. And if Sadler's collection provided the visual stimulus, Fry's writings provided the textual grounding for Moore's burgeoning interest in the extra-European, as Moore recalled:

Actually Roger Fry's *Vision and Design* was the most lucky discover for me. I came on it by chance whilst looking for another book in the Leeds Reference Library... Fry opened the way to other books and to the realisation of the British Museum. That was really the beginning."<sup>105</sup>

Indeed, twenty years later in an essay for *The Listener* on 'Primitive Art', Moore was still rehearsing and reconfiguring Fry's ideas, even as he turned away from the form lessons of the British Museum in his work.<sup>106</sup>

But as Alan Wilkinson noted in the introduction to his survey of Moore's drawings, the facts of his classroom-bound art training – the true beginning – were much more traditional.

It may come as a surprise to those unfamiliar with Henry Moore's early life drawings to discover that his academic training at the Leeds School of Art and at the Royal College of Art was as traditional as the instruction Manet, Degas and Seurat received in Paris in the nineteenth century... Moore was aware from the beginning of his career 'of the importance of drawing to a sculptor's development...'<sup>107</sup>

Though none of Moore's drawings from his time at the Leeds School of Art survive, Wilkinson suggests that the results would have likely been non-descript, telling us less about the works he saw in Sadler's office and found in books, and more about "the atmosphere of an English provincial art school."<sup>108</sup> Moore himself recalled that "[a]rt schools then, and especially in the provinces, had a terribly closed, academic outlook",

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<sup>104</sup> Read, *Henry Moore*, p.31

<sup>105</sup> Henry Moore, statement in *Partisan Review*, New York, March-April 1947; quoted in Harrison, *English Art and Modernism*, p.219.

<sup>106</sup> See Henry Moore, "Primitive Art", *The Listener*, 5 June 1935, pp.944-946; reprinted in Wilkinson, *Henry Moore: Writings and Conversations*, pp.102-106

<sup>107</sup> Alan Wilkinson (ed.), *The Drawings of Henry Moore*, exhibition (Tate Gallery, London, 1977), p.9

<sup>108</sup> Ibid

where “any excitement” that students might have had about the pursuit of an art education were “deadened and killed off by humdrum copying from the antique, just making very careful stump-shaded drawings with no understanding whatever of form.”<sup>109</sup>

However, in an interview with the art historians Vera and John Russell for the *Sunday Times*, Moore recalled his first experience of Leeds more pragmatically:

My first few months at College had rid me of the romantic idea that art schools were of no value and I’d begun to draw from life as hard as I could. A sculptor needs to be able to see and understand three-dimensional form strongly, and you can only do that with a great deal of experience and struggle... the human figure is both the most exacting subject one can set oneself, and the subject one should know best...

It’s not only a matter of training – you can’t understand it without being emotionally involved, and so it isn’t just academic training: it really is a deep, strong, fundamental struggle to understand oneself as much as to understand what one’s drawing.<sup>110</sup>

To understand the beginnings of Moore’s education as fuelled by this sort of close engagement with the academic ideal alongside which he versed himself in the form lessons and rhetoric of Modernism goes some way toward engaging with Moore’s subsequent artistic approach, and the ways in which he sought to understand himself and to present that outwardly, in form. In the same interview, Moore would also declare: “I’m terribly grateful that I didn’t get to Leeds till I was old enough not to believe what I was told by teachers.”<sup>111</sup> The independence of his thought even at such an early stage of his schooling was surely central to his ability, and propensity, to bend the rules.

It was this that led him to develop upon that which he was discovering in books, away from the trappings of the classroom. Writing about the early “Bushey sketchbook” of 1920, Lichtenstern located the breadth of Moore’s influents at this early stage of his time in Leeds:

On 39 written pages and in 26 drawings Moore had his selection of Chaldean, Babylonian, Assyrian, Greek and Roman sculpture, and worked over the artistic ideals of Michelangelo, his long-standing model. He also attempted to acquire an

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<sup>109</sup> John and Vera Russell, “Conversations with Henry Moore”, *The Sunday Times*, 17<sup>th</sup> and 24<sup>th</sup> December 1961; reprinted in James (ed.), *Henry Moore on Sculpture*, p.32

<sup>110</sup> Ibid, p.32

<sup>111</sup> Ibid, p.17-18

overall view of Greek, Roman, Byzantine, as well as Gothic and Renaissance architectural forms. Thus it was with remarkable care that the 22-year old assimilated a basic art historical knowledge which, significantly, extended beyond the traditional curriculum of classical and Hellenistic antiquities.”<sup>112</sup>

But it was still only a two-dimensional engagement with non-academic sculptural form.

It was not until the second year of Moore’s studies at Leeds that he decided to concentrate on sculpture, as a result of which a department was set up in which Moore was to be the only student. Moore’s sculpture tutor, R. T. Cotterill, “an intelligent person and a good teacher”, had recently qualified from the Royal College.<sup>113</sup> And though little of Cotterill’s influence on Moore has been written – partly, perhaps, because Moore considered that “he wasn’t a good sculptor himself” – the facts of Cotterill’s appreciation of the Royal Academy’s expectations together with his undivided attention would certainly have contributed to Moore’s successful application for a Royal Exhibition scholarship after just one year of a two-year examination course.<sup>114</sup> As Moore wrote it, “he could concentrate entirely on teaching me all the tricks he knew.”<sup>115</sup> Those tricks surely helped Moore negotiate his way into the Royal College, again with the support of a grant in the form of a Royal Exhibition Scholarship.<sup>116</sup>

Moore’s move to London would be the setting for his true discovery of extra-European sculpture at the British Museum, supported by the collections of the Victoria and Albert Museum and the contents of Zwemmers bookshop, all of which he recounted for a memorial edition of *XXe Siècle* dedicated to him in 1972.

At the Royal College Wednesday afternoons were free, and so were Saturdays and Sundays. On most Saturday or Wednesday afternoons I would go to the British Museum, and on the way I often stopped to look in the bookshops in Charing Cross Road, particularly Zwemmer’s, which specialized in books on the visual arts. I had a very small scholarship grant and could not afford to spend much money on books, and so I would stay a full hour on end looking through books which interested me. Zwemmer never objected, and in this way I began to know something of what was going on in Paris from such periodicals as “Cahier d’Art” (sic). I also examined many

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<sup>112</sup> Lichtenstern, *Henry Moore: Work – Theory – Impact*, p.123

<sup>113</sup> Berthoud, *A Life of Henry Moore*, p.57

<sup>114</sup> Wilkinson, *The Drawings of Henry Moore*, p.10; Moore & Hedgecoe, *Henry Moore: My Ideas*, p.31

<sup>115</sup> Donald Hall, “An Interview with Henry Moore”, *Horizon: A Magazine of the Arts*, Vol. iii, No.2, November 1960; reprinted in James (ed.), *Henry Moore on Sculpture*, p.31

<sup>116</sup> Henry Moore, statement in *Partisan Review*, 1947, p.41; Henry Moore, “The First Monograph” in *Homage to Henry Moore: Special Issue of the XXe siècle Review*, ed. G. di San Lazzaro (A. Zwemmer, London, 1972), p.21

books on Negro, Mexican, and other periods and styles of sculpture. After looking at the same books throughout a month or two, I knew them well enough not to buy them...<sup>117</sup>

But while it is likely he poured over books in the way he described, his description of the 'small scholarship grant' might be somewhat disingenuous. Just four years earlier, describing his experience along similar lines, Moore had told John Russell that "with the £90 a year that I had in scholarships I was one of the real rich students at the College and I had no worries or problems at all except purely and simply my own development as a sculptor."<sup>118</sup> It was a position of financial security that allowed Moore an unparalleled opportunity to pursue his interests, founded on his father's advice to remain employable.

However, writing the history of Moore's access to such visual cultures, Charles Harrison found duplicity in Moore's avowal of his interest in the 'common world language of form' given this context:

It should be remembered... that Moore bought the time he spent foraging in the British Museum with a currency which was recognized even by the most conservative factions at the Royal College of Art: the kind of application to academic disciplines of modelling and of drawing from the cast and from life that was characteristic of one determined to make the most of opportunities of self-betterment.<sup>119</sup>

It is a retrospectively prejudicial treatment of Moore given Moore's readiness to discuss his time at the Royal College, and even more so given the critic's own privileged education. Rather, I would suggest, Moore's exploitation of the situation given to him was characteristic of the upwardly mobile class of which he and his siblings were a part and in which they had prospered, as suggested by the pragmatism Moore displayed in the quote Harrison used to support his point. In 1947, Moore wrote:

for a considerable while after my discovery of the British Museum there was a bitter struggle within me, on the one hand, between the need to follow my course

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<sup>117</sup> Henry Moore, "The First Monograph", p.21. In comparable terms, Jacob Epstein described his recourse to the British Museum thus: "My aim was to perfect myself in modelling, drawing and carving, and it was at this period I visited the British Museum, and whenever I had done a new piece of work I compared it mentally with what I had seen at the museum." Jacob Epstein, *Let There Be Sculpture: An Autobiography* (Michael Joseph, London, 1940), p.32; quoted in Adrian Locke, "Looking Around at Leisure: Sculptors and the British Museum", in Penelope Curtis and Keith Wilson (ed.), *Modern British Sculpture*, exhibition (Royal Academy of Arts, London, 2011), p.84

<sup>118</sup> Russell, *Henry Moore*, p.22

<sup>119</sup> Harrison, *English Art and Modernism*, p.219. Moore's evocation of the 'common world language of form' was first presented in his article on "Primitive Art" for *The Listener*, 24 August 1951, p.102

at college in order to get a teacher's diploma and, on the other, the desire to work freely at what appealed to me in sculpture. At one point I was seriously considering giving up college and working only in that direction that attracted me. But, thank goodness, I somehow came to the realisation that academic discipline is valuable. And my need to have a diploma, in order to earn a living, helped... finally I hit on a sort of compromise arrangement: academic work during the term, and during the holidays a free reign to the interests I had developed in the British Museum."<sup>120</sup>

Indeed, in his history of social radicalism in the arts, Egbert remarked upon the Royal College's role in catering to "students who would have to earn a living from their art, and who therefore were much more likely to become socially and politically concerned", as opposed to the Slade which catered primarily for well-to-do families in the early part of the century.<sup>121</sup>

The freedom Moore found to simultaneously pursue both his interests and his education provided him with opportunities previously reserved for the moneyed classes, and illustrates, once more, the circumstantial nature of Moore's opportunities and the significance of education as both a tool for learning and for earning, central to Moore's development.

In a recently completed doctoral thesis at the Courtauld Institute, Samuel Elmer discussed the impact of basic economic conditions on the output of the English avant-garde during the '20s and '30s, arguing for what he has called a "moderate Modernism": that is, artistic endeavour curtailed and diluted by the need to attract buyers and to make a living in such a hostile market place. He noticed that at that time all the ambitious artists had previously gone to the Slade, but that the Slade did not award teaching diplomas, depriving its students of the necessary means to support themselves should they be without private means:

The choice they faced was between a school that would make you an artist but not a teacher, or allow you to become a teacher but not an artist – at least not a modern artist. By attending the RCA at this time Moore became one of the first English artists able to square this circle.<sup>122</sup>

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<sup>120</sup> Henry Moore, statement in *Partisan Review*,

<sup>121</sup> Donald Drew Egbert, *Social Radicalism and the Arts, Western Europe: A Cultural History from the French Revolution to 1968* (Gerald Duckworth & Co, London, 1970), p.508

<sup>122</sup> Samuel Elmer, "Democratic Modernism: Promoting Modern Art in England 1908-1934", *PhD Thesis*, Courtauld Institute of Art, March 2012, p.234-238. In the concluding chapter of Elmer's thesis, he suggested that it was through the almost uniquely advantageous position of Moore's tutorial work that he was able to sidestep



That happenstance was led by the figures present at the RCA at the time of Moore's attendance who, in varying ways, helped to direct the development of his work.<sup>123</sup> Of particular significance was the Royal College's "fortunate" appointment of Sir William Rothenstein as principal just prior to Moore's arrival there, as he described some years later:

The college was pretty much in the doldrums. It had become a place to train teachers, to train teachers, to train teachers and so on – something eating its own tail, having no real contacts with the outside world, or with the real world of painting and sculpture.

Rothenstein, who believed that teaching art should not be a career in itself, shook up the college in many ways and gradually changed many of the old staff... He brought this air of a wider more international outlook into the college. There is no doubt that I gained much through Rothenstein being Principal of the college.<sup>124</sup>

Indeed, after Moore's graduation in 1924, it would be Rothenstein that offered him a part-time role as an instructor at the RCA and assistant to Ernest Cole, a Royal Academician, after the previous professor of sculpture had resigned his post. The contract was for two days a week, and paid £240 per annum for just 66 days work a year which supported his work throughout the rest of the '20s.<sup>125</sup>

By contrast, Moore's next teaching position at the Chelsea School of Art from 1931 to 1939 would pay between £178 and £225 per year for similarly few days' work, affording Moore the opportunity to work on sculpture and buy materials ahead of future sales.<sup>126</sup> Herbert Read's wife would reminisce years later that Moore was frequently "the only man who had

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this trend towards moderation, putting Moore's work on a different register from his British contemporaries from the start, closer to the "large measure of freedom'... that, when provided by dealers, had made possible the greatest achievements of the Parisian avant-garde." I am grateful to Sam for providing me with a copy of his thesis and discussing it with me at an early point of my studies.

<sup>123</sup> Peter Fuller has suggested that "insufficient emphasis has been placed on the influence of [Moore's] teachers and colleagues." Peter Fuller, *Henry Moore: An Interpretation*, p.27

<sup>124</sup> Anon, "Henry Moore", *The Times*, November 2<sup>nd</sup> 1967. More plainly, Berthoud has suggested it was "typical of Henry's luck" that he arrived at the RCA at the right time. Berthoud, *The Life of Henry Moore*, p. 48

<sup>125</sup> Berthoud, *The Life of Henry Moore*, p.64

<sup>126</sup> In 1933 Moore was paid 33 shillings per 3 hour class, equating to £178 per year, and by 1938 he had risen to a height of 37 shillings per class, equating to £225 per annum, Chelsea School of Art Archives. As a point of comparison, Moore sold his *Recumbent Figure* of 1938 to Tate via the Contemporary Art Society for £300, having bought the block of wood for £50. See letter from Moore to Kenneth Clark, 13<sup>th</sup> April 1939, Tate Gallery Archives, TGA 8812/1/3/2002-2050; Henry Moore cited in Henry J. Seldis, *Henry Moore in America* (Phaidon, New York, 1973), p.50

any money,” a true indicator of the fortune of his situation, and the freedom that education afforded him.<sup>127</sup>

Of more immediate significance at the Royal Academy was the influence of Leon Underwood who taught drawing there from 1920 as well as at the Brook Green School of Drawing which he had set up at his home a year later, at which he formed an “intimate social and artistic clique” including Moore, Hepworth and Eileen Agar among its number.<sup>128</sup>

Peter Fuller has described Underwood as having “a spiritual and imaginative view of art, not significantly different from Moore’s own”, while Ben Whitworth’s description of Underwood’s style as unable to be pigeonholed, the result of the “diversity and seeming inconsistency of his modes and methods” appears similarly comparable.<sup>129</sup> Though only eight years Moore’s senior, Underwood’s integration of his own practice with a commitment to teaching and encouraging others must have had an impact on the young Moore. Indeed, it is likely he played a significant role in introducing Moore to both the practice of direct carving and an interest in African and Mayan art, of which Underwood had a small collection, as did Jacob Epstein who Moore would also get to know at that time. Ben Whitworth has suggested that Underwood would later resent Moore’s failure to acknowledge his influence, and suggested it was, in part, a product of an innate rivalry between the two.<sup>130</sup>

Fuller has also drawn attention to Gilbert Ledward’s arrival at the RCA in 1926 as Professor of Sculpture, who was another figure said to have an antagonistic relationship with Moore. By that point Moore was also on the payroll, however, and their differing approaches could complement each other or simply be ignored.<sup>131</sup>

Less pronounced and largely ignored, however, is the potential impact of the Royal College’s Head of Sculpture during Moore’s studies, Derwent Wood – a proponent of ‘the New Sculpture’ – described by Angela Summerfield as belonging “to that generation of

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<sup>127</sup> Lady Read, “Moving into the Mall Studios”, *Belsize 2000: A Living Suburb* (Belsize Conservation Area Advisory Committee, London, 2000), p. 78

<sup>128</sup> Moore’s cohort at both the Royal College and Underwood’s Brook Green School also included significant figures in the development of British modernism such as John Piper, Ceri Richards, Edward Burra, Barnett Freedman, Gertrude Hermes, Edward Bawden and Eric Ravilious. John Rothenstein, *Summer’s Lease: Autobiography 1901-1938* (Hamish Hamilton, London, 1965), p.99; Ben Whitworth, *The Sculpture of Leon Underwood* (Henry Moore Foundation in Association with Lund Humphries, Aldershot, 2000), p.15

<sup>129</sup> Fuller, *Henry Moore: An Interpretation*, p.27; Whitworth, *The Sculpture of Leon Underwood*, p.7

<sup>130</sup> Whitworth, *The Sculpture of Leon Underwood*, pp.14-15

<sup>131</sup> Fuller, *Henry Moore*, p.27

British artists whose careers straddled the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> centuries, and were therefore subject to the changing dynamics of the British art world.”<sup>132</sup>

Wood is still best known for his work on public monuments such as the memorial to the Machine Gun Corps from the First World War at Hyde Park, and both his artistic practice and his role in the setting up of the (Royal) Society of British Sculptors was the product of his training in the Victorian tradition. Its emphasis on the need to reconcile art and design, informed by the thought of Ruskin and Morris and of the same trajectory that had prompted the instigation of the Royal College was also, in many ways, a precedent, theoretically at least, for the later developments of the Bauhaus.<sup>133</sup>

As such, it might be suggested that Wood’s work in the public sphere and his appreciation for art’s public service value had a passive influence on Moore’s later turn to the public sphere. Though opposed by the generation that immediately followed him, not least of which Moore, Wood’s work was a manifestation of the shape of state commissioning in the ‘20s as Moore’s would be in the ‘40s. Indeed it was the re-emergence of similar conditions – the fallout of a Second World War – that was in part responsible for Moore to turn to public commissions in the ‘40s. Further significant might be the fact that Moore turned to a representational form for those works in part encouraged by a dormant interest in the forms of the Italian renaissance first formulated and encouraged by his trip to Italy whilst still a student at the Royal College. That, again, was the result of a scholarship, awarded for the study of Old Masters, though Moore initially argued against the stipulation of Italy as the destination, hoping instead to visit Paris and Berlin. It was only in the ‘40s that Moore was able to appreciate and utilise the form lessons he had suppressed from that trip:

Six months’ exposure to the masterworks of European art which I saw on my trip had stirred up a violent conflict with my previous ideals. I couldn’t seem to shake off the new impressions, or make use of them without denying all I had devoutly believed in before. I found myself helpless and unable to work. Then gradually I began to find my way out of my quandary in the direction of my early interests... Still the effects of that trip never really faded. But until my *Shelter Drawings* during the war I never seemed to feel free to use what I learned on that trip to Italy in my

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<sup>132</sup> Angela Summerfield, “Francis Derwent Wood”, in Penelope Curtis (ed.), *Sculpture in 20<sup>th</sup> Century Britain, Vol.II: A Guide to Sculptors in the Leeds Collections* (Henry Moore Institute, Leeds, 2003), pp.376-377

<sup>133</sup> Ibid, p.376; Jonathan Blackwood and Matthew Withy, “Aesthetics: forms and meanings 1900-1925”, in Penelope Curtis (ed.), *Sculpture in 20<sup>th</sup> Century Britain, Vol.I: Identity, Infrastructures, Aesthetics, Display, Reception* (Henry Moore Institute, Leeds, 2003), pp.33-42

art – to mix the Mediterranean approach comfortably with my interest in the more elementary concept of archaic and primitive peoples.<sup>134</sup>

That Moore returned to his interests as the occasion allowed, and that he had such a bank of visual knowledge to build upon, was made possible by the shape of his training at its fullest. But of further significance for Moore's turn to the public sphere was his material shift, casting off his recalcitrant dedication to carving in favour of a reproducible art, both in his *Shelter Drawings* and in his application of the properties of bronze to produce editions of his works – beginning with the *Family Group* – and to cast his maquettes expressly for sale. Defining the origins of the New Sculpture and the working methods of its proponents, Susan Beattie wrote:

Whether reaching out into the community as decorators in the service of architecture and industry, or challenging the old, elitist concept of high art in their enthusiasm for the mass-produced, marketable art-object... the New Sculptors advanced together upon ground prepared for them by Alfred Stevens.<sup>135</sup>

Moore's turn to a democratic art might thus be registered as part of a British sculptural tradition, as Fuller has attempted to suggest.<sup>136</sup> But it would perhaps be better to identify Moore's turn as related to a much broader artistic tradition that resulted from the social and industrial revolutions of the nineteenth century, aware of and responding to both the potentiality and the responsibility of art to affect change and to represent new audiences. If 'modernist' form, pace Carey, is to be rendered as a turn away from the masses, then both the New Sculpture and Moore's public works of the '40s should be cast as the obverse of that repulsion, directed towards the masses and representative of the pragmatic reality of social formations. This material discussion underlies much of the argument to follow, to be pursued in tandem with Moore's formal prevarications in order to trace the effect and the continued employment of these early form lessons on the works he produced in the service of the State.

Having discussed the sculptural precedents that impressed themselves on the student Moore, Fuller defined the resulting early works, quoting John Rothenstein, as "little more than exercises in various styles", continuing: "they are exercises because neither the imagery, nor the forms, are yet Moore's own."<sup>137</sup>

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<sup>134</sup> Johnson Sweeney, "Henry Moore", pp.180-182

<sup>135</sup> Susan Beattie, *The New Sculpture* (Yale University Press, London, 1983), p.8

<sup>136</sup> Fuller, *Henry Moore: An Interpretation*, p.16

<sup>137</sup> Ibid, p.28

In a more pronounced manner, Charles Harrison described Moore's early 'experiments' thus:

Moore was not himself responsible for a single, substantial technical advance which could be seen as such in the context of modern sculpture as a whole... [He] was not interested in the idea of avant-garde innovation as an end in itself; rather, formal devices were, for him, simply a way of bringing about such transformations and metamorphoses of natural form as might enable him to intensify the emotive content of his work.<sup>138</sup>

Again, Harrison's critique is inherently biased, and overly concerned with the formal properties of Moore's work as a result of his predisposition towards a historically-loaded approach that, in the post-war period, returned to formalism in a renewal of art's privileged place as the arbiter of value as well as, more problematically, freedom. On the contrary, Moore's work was always deeply historical, and avowedly so, and related to a much wider enunciation of freedom traced through the worker's movement, the extension of the franchise and the push for democratisation to be registered on human terms and in the public sphere. As such, it was in Moore's public works of the '40s that we might see his having turned away from an early preoccupation with the trappings of the *avant-garde* towards a sculpture representative of his impression of art's purpose, to be registered through a diverse and divergent application of form.

Writing on the nature of Jacob Epstein's approach to stylistic appropriation in 1932, J.B. Powell turned the direction of Harrison's criticism on its head, writing

we should be greatly in error in assuming... that his work is "derivative," in the loosely applied sense in which this term is used in art criticism... Rodin has been out of his mind for twenty years or more, while with Egyptian and Greek sculpture his own works shows an identity of principle which is in itself derived from the source an inspiration common to all great sculpture, antique, medieval or modern. It has never been in any sense a mere attempt at copying.<sup>139</sup>

Moore would have found a lot to admire and to agree with in Powell's writing. Indeed, the closest he came to identifying his own subjectivity came in a series of notes penned in 1937 on the theme of 'Art and Social Purpose', written in response to series of question put to him by Powell towards an ultimately unpublished book on the subject. Moore wrote:

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<sup>138</sup> Harrison, *English Art and Modernism*, p.331

<sup>139</sup> L.B. Powell, *Jacob Epstein* (Chapman & Hall Ltd, London, 1932), p.8

There has been no Democratic Art because there has been no real democracy – The people have never been given the opportunity, or the education, or the leisure to appreciate art for its own intrinsic value in living. If a democratic art is likely to be brought about it will be by the existence of real democracy, under which there would be great changes in education, + art would be accessible for all - + not be the privilege (or advertisement) of one class or sect...<sup>140</sup>

Moore's estimation of the value of education is in sympathy with his own experiences, and his proposals are anchored around the role that education must play in the overcoming of class differences. Similarly, with regards to the ideal circumstances for artistic production, Moore wrote:

The more imaginative freedom the artist has the better – complete liberty of creation is the aim – I should not welcome state discipline over artistic ideals – I believe in the state being run for the individual, not the individual being sacrificed to the state – Communal cooperation + organisation are necessary to give equal educational opportunity for all + economic equality + security for all. I (would call myself/am) a socialist – But this in my opinion should lead to greater individual development, to more freedom of thought + expression – (which is essential to the life of an artist – who, whatever his outward political beliefs may be, makes his contribution individually through his personal sensibility – (behaving in his work more in line with anarchist ideals))

(The lack of religious or plutocratic patronage is felt very strongly by the artist today – because he still has to earn his living competitively, + his work is only accessible to a minority either of 'intelligentsia', or (when he has a big enough reputation) to the monied (sic) classes who buy his work mainly from snobbery, (as a mark of social prestige). But the remedy does not lie in going back to religious or plutocratic patronage, + in giving up what gains in imaginative freedom the artist has today.)<sup>141</sup>

And there he finishes, stopping short of prescribing a method by which a more democratic art could be produced without the 'individual being sacrificed to the state'.<sup>142</sup> One might suggest he was still trying to work that out, and in the years that followed, Moore sought answers practically.

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<sup>140</sup> Letter from Henry Moore to L.B. Powell, 2 Jan 1937, HMF Archive

<sup>141</sup> Letter from HM to LB Powell, 2 Jan 1937, HMF Archive.

<sup>142</sup> The proposed book doesn't appear to have ever been published, and the writer LB Powell has little historical trace but for a book on Jacob Epstein from 1932.

Moore's identification of his individualist artistic sensibilities as being "more in line with anarchist ideals" then appears more like an explication of his awareness that his politics weren't doctrinal, and that his democratic and libertarian beliefs, especially with regards to his art, compromised something of his socialism. Again, the lines aren't so clear cut, but it is my contestation that the brand of welfare capitalism offered by the Labour Party in 1945, with the promise of both individual freedoms and national safeguards, was anchored around the same dichotomies. And so just as the Labour Party defined themselves in their pre-election manifesto as unequivocally socialist – "and proud of it" – before forging a path of compromise between capitalism and socialism, the extent to which Moore negotiated both traditional and contemporary forms and functions towards works for both the public sphere and the private market illustrates something of the canniness of his manipulation of the changing social circumstances, and the appropriateness of his working method to that time and place.<sup>143</sup> It was a vocational manoeuvre in keeping with, and influenced by, the broader shifts in cultural production from 1940 onwards that he was involved in.

It is my assertion that the space Moore was given to produce works for the state without imposition or creative dictation in the subsequent ten to fifteen years provided him with the opportunity to respond to these self-directed enquiries, and to produce works which were no longer the "privilege (or advertisement) of one class or sect", but rather a pronouncement on the values of equality and democracy that he held dear, inherited from his father and the humanist concerns of the trade union movement from which he had grown.

That Moore would also go on to be offered and take up the opportunity to participate in committees tasked and self-impelled to consider the larger part that the arts could play in society is a mark of both his contemporaries' conception of his value in such an endeavour and his own belief in the significance of such movements towards a more democratic diffusion of the arts.<sup>144</sup> In brief, those involvements were as follows. In 1941 he joined both the board of the *Arts Enquiry* group for the visual arts and the board of trustees for the Tate

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<sup>143</sup> Sinfield, *Literature, Politics and Culture in Postwar Britain*, p.15; pp.47-59

<sup>144</sup> Richard Calvocoressi remarked upon Moore's role as the sculptor of choice amongst "a small group of dedicated individuals, the majority employed by cultural or educational organisation" who came together on boards and committees to "promote sculpture as a social art – as *the art of the post-war era*." (his italics). Richard Calvocoressi, "Public Sculpture in the 1950s", *British Sculpture in the Twentieth Century*, exhibition (Whitechapel Art Gallery, London, 1981), p.137. Bryan Robertson, however, wrote it thus: "A characteristically North country sense of responsibility makes it almost impossible for Moore to refuse to play his part in committee work and public duties of all kinds that he is so often asked to undertake. No artist can ever have been so unassuming in manner, so ready to give precious time to strangers or to contingencies which almost anyone else would evade." Bryan Robertson (ed.), *Henry Moore: Sculpture 1950-1960*, exhibition (Whitechapel Art Gallery, London, 1960-61) unpaginated preface

Gallery, on the latter of which he served, intermittently, for the following 15 years. In 1943 he joined the arts panel for Council for the Encouragement of Music and the Arts (CEMA: that which would become the Arts Council in the years after the war). Two years later he was appointed to the arts panel of the British Council, and in 1947 he was appointed a member of the Royal Fine Arts Commission.<sup>145</sup>

If Moore's early exposure to the modern schools of art had been first through the availability of avant-garde print culture, then increasingly through the holdings of public and private collections in England and beyond, then it was the conditions of his education and employment that *enabled* him to approach and exist in that broader context of modernist experimentation. It is in that context that his early work must be located, and that his 'figuration' of the 1940s – including all the associated referents from academicism, classicism and art historical canons – begins to take on added resonance.

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<sup>145</sup> Kosinski (ed.), *Henry Moore: Sculpting the 20<sup>th</sup> Century*, pp.146-178; Jörn Weingärtner, *The Arts as a Weapon of War: Britain and the Shaping of Morale in the Second World War* (Tauris Academic Studies, London, 2006), p.194n512; Dartington archives. Michael Foot also suggested to James Hyman that Moore had supported the Labour newspaper *Tribune*, of which Foot was the editor, with both financial contributions and donations of works to raise further funds). Hyman, *The Battle for Realism*, p.230n14



## On the Erudite Origins of Moore's Wartime Mothers

In a February 1945 review of the Herbert Read edited volume *Henry Moore: Sculpture and Drawings*, Niklaus Pevsner declared Moore's *Madonna and Child* from a year previous to be, in his consideration, "the acme of his work up-to-date."<sup>146</sup> This was in distinction to what he identified as Herbert Read's apparent discomfort with Moore's most recent work. Pevsner suggested that Read's attempts to qualify the Madonna's relation to formalist concerns defined by Moore *before* the war belied the Madonna's significance which he argues is validated, rather, by Moore's integration of both

the associational *and* [my italics] the aesthetic qualities [which] enhance each other so that the final result is a fuller and more intense emotional pleasure than that attainable by aesthetic (or associational) values alone.<sup>147</sup>

Contemplating Moore's preference for figuration and his rejection of the abstract route taken by his contemporaries – Naum Gabo is the comparison – Pevsner offered the following distinction:

The answer, if my interpretation... is acceptable, would be that the born abstract artist is a law-giver, not one who patiently listens. Henry Moore does; his notebooks show how he lets forms grow.<sup>148</sup>

Moore's attention to form, how he 'patiently listens' and what the results of that listening and *looking* entail, are the subject of this section of the thesis. To locate Moore's Madonna as the 'acme' of his career up to 1943 is to signpost it as a high watermark of achievement in the context of what came before: the culmination of a cumulative and developmental

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<sup>146</sup> Niklaus Pevsner, "Thoughts on Henry Moore", *The Burlington Magazine for Connoisseurs*, Vol. 86, No. 503, February 1945, p.47

<sup>147</sup> Ibid, p.48. The article is, in part, a review of the 1943 Lund Humphries edition of Moore's sculptures and drawings, with particular reference to Read's introduction and the views espoused therein. He continues "Thus I contend that Henry Moore has limited the response to his work for reasons of an arbitrary aesthetic purism. What he has achieved in spite of these self-imposed limitations is all the more worthy of admiration".

<sup>148</sup> Ibid, p.49

process, perhaps. Indeed, such a definition appears to implicitly suggest both lessons learnt through personal experience and deference to the lessons of history.

The Italian political theorist and philosopher Antonio Gramsci defined this idea of an incremental construction of experiential-self, aligned with a sense of the nature of inheritance and of heritage thus:

The personality is strangely composite: it contains Stone Age elements and principles of a more advanced science, prejudices from all past phases of history at the local level and intuitions of a future philosophy which will be that of a human race united the world over. To criticise one's own conception of the world means therefore to make it a coherent unity and to raise it to the level reached by the most advanced thought in the world. It therefore also means criticism of all previous philosophy, in so far as this has left stratified deposits in popular philosophy. The starting point of critical elaboration is the consciousness of what one really is, and is 'knowing thyself' as a product of the historical process to date which has deposited in you an infinity of traces, without leaving an inventory.<sup>149</sup>

By aligning consciousness with an inaccessible historical continuum in which those 'traces' are brought to bear, Gramsci defines contemporaneity as cumulative and constant: historically located and defined by a recognition of the foundations upon which progress is built, as well as one's place in relation to them, in order to move past them.

To read Moore's artistic endeavour thus – as his own individual critique of the world – is to recognise, also, his conception of his self in relation to it. His recourse to the styles and methods of others might then be read as an implicit identification of and with the (art) 'historical process' of which he was a part, and in relation to which he validated his approach.

In a chapter from her 2008 book concerned with Moore's 'dialogue with tradition', and in particular the traditions of antiquity and of the Italian renaissance, Christa Lichtenstern wrote of Moore's artistic choices that "this sense of a cognitive obligation towards the world history of sculpture stands fairly isolated in the practice of avant-garde sculpture of the time."<sup>150</sup> She defined his working method in distinction from contemporaries such as

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<sup>149</sup> Antonio Gramsci, *Prison Notebooks* (Lawrence & Wishart, London, 1971), p.324; quoted in Sinfield, *Literature, Culture and Politics in Postwar Britain*, p.1. Sinfield employed this quote in part as an epigraph for the introduction to his important work on postwar culture. In so doing, he identified the grounding for his approach; an account of British post-war culture shot through with the traces of internationalism and the impact of mass media which understands historical and personal progress as the result of human interaction and perception.

<sup>150</sup> Lichtenstern, *Henry Moore: Work – Theory – Impact*, p.126

Picasso, Brancusi, Giacometti and Gonzalez – all “wide-eyed” visitors to ethnographic museums too – as more overtly derivative, writing

Moore’s thinking, however, is unusually historic... His need to work from the historical tradition, indeed, to establish himself within it, coincides with his general work ethic of a morphogenetic derivation of form”.<sup>151</sup>

It is a description of Moore’s practice that accounts for what is a developed and astute identification of Moore’s wide and varied range of referents; Lichtenstern’s weighty volume on Moore is a fine work of connoisseurship. But all too frequently the argument fails to extend beyond the point of identification into analysis. This section of the thesis is concerned with beginning to retrace Moore’s artistic process, to analyse his approach, and to rewrite his personal ‘inventory’ as a way in to unpicking his artistic ambitions and intentions. This will be done in relation to a series of public works built around the theme of the mother and child.

Chapter two begins with a rendition of the beginning of Moore’s re-conception of this favourite theme towards a series of sketches penned towards an ultimately incomplete commission. This was for the Senate House building at the centre of the new University of London campus, built between 1932 and 1937. It was there that Moore began to translate his interest in the theme into a formal language capable of responding to the nature of the commission; one which displayed both Moore’s investment in and utilisation of the visual culture of the late 1930s. Through an analysis of the commission and its resonance I will approach something of the reason behind why Moore might have deemed the mother and child an appropriate theme, and further, why he might have considered it such a significant theme more broadly in his oeuvre.

Moore’s work on this commission will be shown to have been the stimulus behind much of his subsequent development of the mother and child theme as the ‘40s unfolded, taken forwards with two significant but widely divergent public commissions; his pen and ink *Shelter Drawings* produced for the War Artist’s Advisory Committee and a large stone *Madonna and Child* for a Church in Northampton. These works are the subjects of the third and fourth chapters of this thesis.

Each of these works demanded a heightened sense of purpose and meaning from the artist at a time of socio-historic rupture, and each responded to that need in uniquely effective and affective ways. Tracing Moore’s development of the mother and child theme through

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<sup>151</sup> Ibid, p.126

these works purposefully reconnects Moore's efforts during wartime with his pre-war development as an artist, and his negotiation of the differences between the public and the private. Tracking the shifts in his formal approach, meanwhile, locates the reorientation of his recourse to the histories of art and culture that were central to his working method, and points the way to understanding his intent.

Anne Wagner has defined the negotiation of the poles of public/private in the context of Moore and his contemporaries' work in the '20s as a way out of the "dead monumentality" of the public sculpture that preceded them, achieved "by steering straight for what was intensely intimate, but also eminently public, terrain."<sup>152</sup> But as she acknowledges in respect of the changing context for Moore's work and, indeed, its potential for reappraisal in retrospect:

motherhood is not a universal, it has been invented and reinvented over time. The artifacts of its construction are to be found in the fields of science and politics and culture, landmarks in, and products of, psychoanalysis and social policy, consumerism, advertising and art.<sup>153</sup>

These are the points of orientation that guide the development of this section.

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<sup>152</sup> Wagner, *Mother Stone*, pp.1-4

<sup>153</sup> Wagner, *Mother Stone*, p.100

## 2. 'Halfway Between the Classical and the New': Sketches Towards a Commission for the University of London's Senate House

In what appears to be the first page of notes drafted towards the commission for reliefs to adorn the side of the Senate House at the centre of the University of London campus in Bloomsbury, dated 1938, Henry Moore communicated, perhaps only to himself, his thoughts on what such a series of reliefs might look like (fig.1):

Try reclining figure / Try crouching figure – or seated figure – And torso down to hips –

Think of subject matter – / Mother + Child – University the mother – child the students /

& Try abstract ideas / Still life group of education / or of Arts / sciences / or life mixed with / Education

Seated Figures (see drawings / done at Cottage)

figure / among books / etc / abstracted

Keep it all / architectural / & big.

Think hard of the Architectural / problem – of the relation of sculpture / to Architecture /

Scale etc / static / Think of the abstract reliefs

Imagine that one was doing / it for oneself or say for / a Wells Coates building.<sup>154</sup>

The forms considered by Moore and the note “see drawings done at Cottage”, coupled with the corresponding sketches of various half-length figures and mothers with children – all cribbed from earlier sketchbook pages – suggest a desire to continue to explore formal and thematic concerns already of interest to him: to relate the commission to a concurrent

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<sup>154</sup> HMF1418; Anne Garrould (ed.), *Henry Moore: Complete Drawings 1916-1983: Volume 2* (Lund Humphries, London, 1998). From this point on I will refer to the Henry Moore Foundation catalogue number only for each work referenced, either in the text or as a footnote. The full details of the HMF catalogue raisonnés can be found in the bibliography.

investigation of form which was, from the very start, limited to a small collection of thematic tropes rich for elaboration. In later life, Moore described these as his “inexhaustible subjects”.<sup>155</sup>

But the extent of Moore’s willingness to engage with the commission’s challenges and restrictions are also reflected in these notes. His self-admonishment to ‘think hard of the Architectural problem’ alongside the semi- apologia of ‘imagine that one was doing it for oneself’ appear somehow representative of a coincident interest *in* and wariness *of* the commission, or of that implicit in the very nature of commissions; a loss of control.

This page is one of ten sketchbook pages presented together in the catalogue raisonné of Moore’s drawings as variants on ‘Ideas / Studies for Sculpture / Relief Carvings’ (figs.2-7).<sup>156</sup> Though long since removed from a single notebook and largely undated, the grouping of these pages together appears to retrace Moore’s seemingly rapid development of those preliminary ideas made in note form into more clearly articulated sketches. Moreover, their concurrence in the catalogue raisonné pages suggests a purposeful and ostensibly complete process, with the final work, titled unambiguously *Projects for Relief Sculpture on London University*, appearing to represent the culmination of Moore’s thought process (fig.8).<sup>157</sup> The forms depicted there would be repeated and re-presented in the Shelter Drawings and, I will argue, in the form of the *Madonna and Child* carved for St. Matthew’s Church in Northampton five years later.

It was upon reading those self-penned notes towards the commission quoted at the outset – otherwise barely commented upon in the literature on Moore – that the foundational arguments of this thesis began to be formulated. Scribbled rapidly above, alongside, and below seven small preliminary attempts at ideas for the panels, each drafted with varying levels of resolve, and apparently executed in isolated bursts given the non-sequential, disordered arrangement of the notes and the haphazard boxing-off of the drafts in the bottom right corner, these words suggested two important aspects of Moore’s approach to this commission which demand further attention.

1) The apparent seriousness with which Moore approached this commission, at least at its onset, contrary to that suggested by the drawings’ lack of critical reception, and

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<sup>155</sup> Henry Moore: *Drawings 1969-1979* (Wildenstein, New York, 1979), p.29; quoted in Wilkinson, *Henry Moore: Writings and Conversations*, p.213

<sup>156</sup> See HMF1418 – HMF1420; HMF1423 – HMF1424a

<sup>157</sup> HMF1424

2) Moore's conception of the mother and child motif's pertinence and potential metaphoric purpose with relation to the intended site of the work.

It is the latter of these points that has prompted in me the most speculation, as I have attempted to consider and to understand the ways in which Moore's relation of the mother and child to the process and the practice of education might have affected, and been affected by, his *personal* engagement with education formerly as a tutor, and latterly as a sculptor of increasingly public works. In order to approach an understanding of Moore's intent, I will return to his development of the mother and child theme throughout the '30s to trace his use of this subject matter. But first I will present an account of why these drawings for the Senate House commission have not been more productively discussed previously.

An explanation of the virtual omission of these works from histories of Moore's work might well begin with their connection to an unresolved and incomplete work, and yet the significance of Moore's intention to work again with Charles Holden demands attention. A decade earlier, Holden had given Moore his first public commission; a relief symbolising 'the West Wind' for 55 Broadway, the headquarters of the London Underground company (fig.9). It was a commission that placed Moore's work in direct relation to the works of Jacob Epstein and Eric Gill who also worked on reliefs for the building, and thus represented Moore's public enshrinement both physically and theoretically.

Looking back at his public works in 1955, Moore remarked that he had been reluctant to take the commission because, at that point, "relief sculpture symbolized for me the humiliating subservience of the sculptor to the architect".<sup>158</sup> But in his writing on the commission, Richard Cork has suggested that the abundance of drawings produced towards the commission demonstrates that Moore "went about his task with far more enthusiasm and dedication than his recollection of events in later years would suggest."<sup>159</sup>

Furthermore, the extent to which each of the sculptors responded to the architect's brief, producing works in harmony with the 'Cubist-classical' style of the building's architecture, suggests not so much subservience as cooperation, or collaboration.<sup>160</sup>

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<sup>158</sup> Henry Moore, "Sculpture in the Open Air"

<sup>159</sup> Cork's discussion of Moore's work with Holden on the reliefs for 55 Broadway covers all the necessary ground on this subject. Richard Cork, "Overhead Sculpture for the Underground Railway", *Art Beyond the Gallery in Early 20<sup>th</sup> Century England* (Yale University Press, London, 1985), pp.249-296

<sup>160</sup> See R.H. Wilenski, "Glyptics", *The Fortnightly Library*, September 1931, p.398; which is Wilenski's book review of Kington Parks, *The Art of Carved Sculpture* (Chapman & Hall, London, 1931)

In the same talk Moore described his plans for Senate House as works he “couldn’t sustain any excitement about”, but again his work towards the commission and its impact on his later works suggests otherwise.<sup>161</sup> Indeed, Richard Cork has suggested that the direct, friendly relationship Moore developed with Holden was “different from the usual strained and mistrustful relationship between architect and sculptor in the twentieth century.”<sup>162</sup> Moore’s agreement to work on a second commission with Holden thus suggests an ambition on his part to work in collaboration with an architect he clearly respected.

Furthermore, archival notes related to the commission suggest that a more likely reason for the reliefs’ incompleteness might have been due to the unwillingness of the University’s committee to court the sort of adverse publicity garnered by Holden in his employment of Jacob Epstein on a commission for the BMA Building.<sup>163</sup> The extent of Moore’s ‘interest’ in the commission might have had little to do with its outcome.

A more telling and more tangible account of Moore’s engagement with the commission, meanwhile, might be found in the continued presence of six stone blocks which sit flush from the side of Senate House, four of which bear the basic form of a frontal portrait relief, but little more (fig.10). That Moore’s drawings for Senate House appear to reference Epstein’s earlier works for 55 Broadway would surely have been a matter of concern – or of vindication – for Holden (fig. 11). But it also suggests similarly that Moore’s consideration of the project was purposeful and measured, and that he appreciated the confidence Holden had in modern artists to pursue public commissions.

By registering, from the start, the significance of these drawings as the apparent impetus behind Moore’s development of the mother and child theme in the years that followed, I mean to treat these works as a beginning. It is through an analysis of these drawings that we are best placed to approach Moore’s purpose and practice, and to consider the extent of his investment in and conception of the proposed reliefs’ value, through which we can then re-approach the full resonance and meaning of the works which followed.

In the catalogue for Moore’s 1951 exhibition at Tate, the curator David Sylvester suggested that, given Moore’s extended engagement with the theme of the mother and child, it seems likely he would have produced works similar to the *Shelter Drawings* even “without the stimulus of the Shelters.”<sup>164</sup> The suggestion is a problematic one, and one which belies

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<sup>161</sup> Moore, “Sculpture in the Open Air”

<sup>162</sup> Cork, “Overhead Sculpture for the Underground Railway”, p.268

<sup>163</sup> For an account of the Epstein controversy, see Sarah Crellin, “Let There Be History: Epstein’s BMA House Sculptures”, in *Modern British Sculpture*, exhibition (Royal Academy of Arts, London, 2012), pp.36-42

<sup>164</sup> David Sylvester (ed.), *Sculptures and Drawings by Henry Moore*, exhibition (Tate Gallery, London, 1951), p.17



the seriousness of Moore's evocative and pointed representations of London's poor sheltering in the underground during the Blitz of the city between 1940 and 1941, to be discussed in the following chapter. But it does gesture towards the fact that Moore's stylistic approach to the mother and child theme as it was developed at that time might begin earlier, and outside of the context of war.

This leads me to suggest a final reason for the marginalisation of these earlier sketchbook notes in histories of Moore's work. It was only after the war began and materials for sculpture ran out, so the conventional wisdom goes, that Moore turned to a representational, two dimensional form indicative of his desire to describe life during the Blitz.<sup>165</sup> The preponderance of texts related specifically to Moore's *Shelter Drawings*, be they books or independent chapters in volumes, few of which mention the Senate House Commission, only add to the illusion of their distinction from that which came both before and after: an 'interpolation in Moore's art' as Andrew Causey has defined this treatment unfavourably.<sup>166</sup>

The catastrophic impact of war and the shifting focus of artistic pursuits after its conclusion mark out its beginning as an erstwhile full stop in the history of British art, after which everything changes. Thus Moore's career is divided up into pre-war and post-war periods, with his wartime work more usually affixed to the latter. The beginning of the Second World War is inscribed as the dividing line between Moore's early and late careers as though these were distinct periods. If, as discussed in the introduction, Moore's pre-war work was concerned largely with the production of small works for a small private market and his later work characterized by the production of major works for public sites, it makes sense to begin any treatment of his later career with the works that marked his entry into the public consciousness. But locating Moore's entry into the public sphere through his work with Holden disrupts that narrative, as do the thematic continuities.

Julian Stallabrass effectively presented this point as the introductory remarks of an essay on the subject of Moore's mother and child works:

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<sup>165</sup> The first example of this treatment of Moore's career was published just four years into the war, in Herbert Read's introduction to what would become the first part of Moore's collected works. "The outbreak of war in 1939 gave a sudden check to the sculptor's work. As the war progressed the materials of his craft became unobtainable... but one outlet was left to the artist – his drawings." Herbert Read, "Introduction", 1944, p.xxxvi

<sup>166</sup> Andrew Causey, *The Drawings of Henry Moore* (Lund Humphries, Farnham, 2010), p.117. See also: Julian Andrews, *London's War: The Shelter Drawings of Henry Moore* (Lund Humphries, Aldershot, 2002); Robert Melville, "The Shelter Sketchbook", *Homage to Henry Moore: Special Issue of the XXe siècle Review*, ed. G. di San Lazzaro (A. Zwemmer, London, 1972), pp.95-101; Frances Carey, *A Shelter Sketchbook* (British Museum publications, London, 1988)

The subject of the Mother and Child was not merely a recurrent motif in the work of Henry Moore but rather a fundamental theme which ran through his entire development as an artist, being expressed in a complex variety of ways, establishing links with and affecting other themes. It is a difficult subject to extricate from his oeuvre.<sup>167</sup>

Stallabrass' mitigation is an important one, and just as it is difficult to 'extricate', so is it difficult to divide, or to distinguish. Any attempt to account for post-war developments and changes in artistic practice and purpose must be traced through from their precursors, with consistencies as important as departures. Indeed, Moore's continued recourse to the same themes employed before the war implicitly suggests continuity.

Most accounts of Moore's engagement with the mother and child theme refer, at least in part, to Eric Neumann's reading of Moore's thematic concerns read as archetypes closely engaged with humanity at an unconscious level.<sup>168</sup> For Neumann, Moore's mothers are 'earth mothers', and the various forms sculpted by Moore suggest an extended "unfolding of the idea of the feminine, of what the 'feminine as such' means".<sup>169</sup> As such, he presents Moore's shelterers as existing in a state between sleep and death, literally returned to the earth, while his Madonna is defined in accordance with Moore's attested ambition to produce a Virgin Mother at "complete ease and repose, as though the Madonna could stay in that position for ever (as, being in stone, she will have to do)."<sup>170</sup> However, Neumann's model removes Moore's works from their context and sets them up as 'universalising', a term which continues to undersell the poignancy of so much of his work. It undermines and negates the specificities of Moore's referents, and their reverberations.

Written socio-historically, it perhaps makes sense to divide Moore's career in two at such a suitable and stereotypical juncture – the impact of the war is everything, always. But without a coincident rendition of formal and of historical progress, of patterns as opposed to ruptures, the socio-history remains incomplete.<sup>171</sup> For just as one can't understand the

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<sup>167</sup> Stallabrass, "The Mother and Child Theme, p.13

<sup>168</sup> Eric Neumann, *the Archetypal World of Henry Moore* (Routledge & Kegan Paul, London, 1959)

<sup>169</sup> Ibid, p. 13

<sup>170</sup> Letter from Henry Moore to Walter Hussey, 28<sup>th</sup> August 1943; quoted in Walter Hussey, *Patron of Art, The Revival of a Great Tradition Among Modern Artists* (Weidenfeld and Nicolson, London, 1985), p.32

<sup>171</sup> A similar treatment of modernism around the time of the First World War makes for an obvious comparison. Sue Malvern has discussed the way that period "gave rise to calls for moderation and accommodation, a new tolerance of experimental art in the life of the nation" as "perceptions of the avant-garde altered, the market changed, and there were calls for a national role for art. In this process, ideas about the nation and its art were continuously renegotiated and the notion of a consensus, capable of accommodating established artists and an experimental avant-garde together, began to appear. Sue Malvern, *Modern Art, Britain and the Great War* (Yale University Press, London, 2004), pp.12-13

social and political revolutions of the post-war period in Britain without grounding one's argument in the history of the pre-war, similarly, Moore's wartime and post-war works demand grounding. That grounding might start here, with those notes on the Senate House commission registering a different emphasis for Moore's approach to his favoured theme than had previously been enunciated. But this approach must be considered in relation to the broader trajectory of Moore's recourse to his 'inexhaustible subjects' in order to trace and position appropriately the shifts in his working method.

Of the ten sketchbook pages collectively grouped as the traces of Moore's work on this project, only the ostensible 'final sketch' has been paid any attention in the literature. Indeed, it was around this work, inscribed "Projects for Relief Sculptures on London University" and signed "Moore 38" along the bottom of the sheet, that the related works were grouped and dated.<sup>172</sup> In the catalogue raisonné of Moore's drawings, Anne Garrould wrote of this work:

Moore seems to have arrived at a solution which for him satisfactorily symbolised the ethics of a university education. The six seated figures, each holding a book, are based loosely on figures rapidly delineated in the preceding sketchbook pages.<sup>173</sup>

Her suggestion is an intriguing one, if one left frustratingly accounted for. So let me take it on. What is it about these six figures that might represent the "ethics of a university education"?

Each of the figures conforms to a basic shared compositional model; a seated female figure, knees turned on a diagonal axis towards her left hand side and jutting out at differing angles giving the impression of varying levels of comfort and/or movement. The seats are rendered similarly, though some are merely blocks whilst one, bottom left, is more approximate to a chair with even the suggestion of a throne. All six women are presented holding books, and they do so in performative poses as though in the process of picking up, opening, or orating from their tomes save for the most statuesque of the six figures, bottom right, who sits quite still, calm, broad shoulders pulled back, with the book resting in her lap suggestively.

In the entry for this drawing in the catalogue for Moore's Royal Academy exhibition of 1988, the similarities of the figures rendered to earlier precedents is remarked upon. The

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<sup>172</sup> The work is now in the collection of the Art Gallery of Ontario, and is the only one of the related drawings to this commission to have been publically exhibited, most notably in Moore's 1951 and 1978 Tate shows, and in the 1988 Royal Academy Show.

<sup>173</sup> HMF1424

basic compositional model employed is suggested to have been drawn from a series of life studies of his wife, Irina, produced by Moore in 1934 (of which the example illustrated and exhibited at the Royal Academy was a work now in the Arts Council collection (fig. 12)). The entry also suggested both the influence of the “Archaic Greek life-sized seated figures in the British Museum” (fig. 13) on Moore’s studies of his wife, and the more immediate appropriation in his studies for Senate House of the form of Michelangelo’s sibyls from the ceiling of the Sistine Chapel, though without elaboration on Moore’s purpose with either.<sup>174</sup>

The laboured and slow accumulation of ideas suggested by the dates of these precedents – Moore’s proposed recourse to works drafted years earlier – appears in opposition to Garrould’s identification of Moore’s ‘rapid delineation’ of forms in the sketch book pages for the commission. Indeed, the foundational composition can be traced even earlier, through numerous representations of Irina seated in Moore’s sketchbooks dating back to his student days. The breadth of the influences gestured towards here, however, provides a way into considering the ways in which these figures might symbolise the effects, if not the ‘ethics’ of a university education; Moore’s moving beyond the practice of life drawings towards a formal harnessing of the lessons learnt from both his own practice and his attention to the histories of art found in galleries, books and classrooms.

Transposing these influences suggested to have affected Moore’s drawings of his wife from 1934 onto his ideas for Senate House might help us locate his intentions. We might note the addition of drapery covering the legs of the figure presented bottom right, pulled across her knees and furthering the sculptural effect of this standout sketch too. In its transmission of the lessons of antiquity learnt in books, it appears the truest manifestation of those qualities sought by Moore in his notes for the commission; ‘Seated Figures... figure among books... Keep it all architectural & big’. But the middle point between sculptural monumentality and life drawing in one’s living room can be traced back directly to art school; to life drawings classes where plaster casts of archaic and classical figures alternated with real-life models in the pursuit of the human ideal.

In Moore’s apparent rehearsal of the influence of figures seen at the British Museum, it might be suggested that he was thinking deliberately of the eventual correspondence his figures would have with the Museum facing them on their southern side. This suggestion might lead us to think further of the ways these ostensibly final sketches might have performed in situ if taken forward for the commission, and further, how they might have

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<sup>174</sup> Susan Compton, *Henry Moore*, p.209, 218

responded to the commission's expectations. It is a question central to their potential purpose, and to conceiving of their rendition of an educational ideal. But we must also consider the circumstances of Moore's access to such collections to appreciate the nature of the education that his understanding thereof was built upon.

Moore's interest in the British Museum was a long-standing one, and his integration of motifs and styles here are the result of an extended investigation into form: his learning process. But the nature of the collection was not without its problems. Adrian Locke has described the way collections such as that housed at the British Museum became the focus of discussions about the nature and the shape of nationalism in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century, as it becoming harder for West European countries to collect in the manner to which they had become used:

Collecting was no longer the preserve of the imperial powers. Objects became synonymous with national identity and as such were powerful symbols for newly established nation states and those seeking independence from colonial masters.<sup>175</sup>

The collections available to Moore remained unparalleled however, and stood in lieu of his ability to visit many of the points of his extra-European interest until later in his life.<sup>176</sup>

Thus Anne Wagner identified Moore's self-proclaimed "world view" of sculpture as having been inherited by way of an interest in both photography and "the modern development of communications". "A more avid user of the wonderfully illustrated 1920s monographs on the tribal would be hard to find", she writes.<sup>177</sup> But she also identifies that in Moore's own pronouncements of his extra-European interests, he "omitted the British empire itself from his short list of the 'modern' sources of his 'big view'."<sup>178</sup> I would argue, rather, that in Moore's recourse to collections such as that of the British Museum alongside the popular anthropological monographs Wagner cited, Moore was responding to a much broader

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<sup>175</sup> Locke, "Looking Around at Leisure", pp.84-91

<sup>176</sup> Moore did not visit Mexico until 1953, a journey he would later describe as "one of the most exhilarating and rewarding weeks of my life. It was quite as interesting as my visit to Greece". He had first visited Greece just two years earlier. *Britain and São Paulo Bienal 1951-19951*, exhibition (British Council, London, 1991), quoted in Wilkinson, *Henry Moore: Writings and Conversations*, p.70. As a point of comparison, Locke notes that Leon Underwood's "journeys to Iceland, Russia, America, Poland and Mexico in the 1920s... were very much the exception rather than the rule." Locke, "Looking Around at Leisure", p.85

<sup>177</sup> Wagner, *Mother Stone*, p.2; 15-16

<sup>178</sup> Ibid, p.16. She is referring to the list of influents Moore cited in an interview of 1930: "Palaeolithic and Neolithic sculpture, Sumerian, Babylonian and Egyptian, Early Greek, Chinese, Etruscan, Indian, Mayan, Mexican and Peruvian, Romanesque, Byzantine and Gothic, Negro, South Sea Island and North American Indian sculpture; actual examples or photographs of all are available, giving us a world view of sculpture never previously possible." Henry Moore, "Contemporary English Sculptors. Henry Moore. Statement", *Architectural Association Journal*, vol.XLV, 1930, pp.408-413; reproduced in Philip James (ed.), *Henry Moore on Sculpture*, pp.57-58

version of visual culture constructed internationally; one that might not be improved or advanced upon by pinning it down specifically to Britain's part in the fallout of such collaboratively orchestrated colonial land-grabs as the Berlin Conference of 1884-85. But to register it in such a way does help to identify the unavoidable connotations of Moore and his contemporaries' adoption of extra-European styles.

Taken as a body of work, these notebook pages completed in advance of the Senate House commission offer a fleeting suggestion of Moore's thought process with regards to the commission; his estimation of the project's significance, and the various forms his reliefs might have taken had they been fulfilled. As such, I am reluctant to accept Garrould's identification of the apparent 'final work' as Moore's 'arrival' at a solution. It seems more productive to discuss all these works collectively as a series – developed but incomplete – given their recourse to an unresolved commission.

Moore's self-directed reminders to 'think of subject matter' and to 'think hard of the architectural problem – of the relation of sculpture to architecture' in those early notes appears central to his approach to these works. But how do the themes and stylistic traits employed by Moore relate to this subject? How do Moore's sketches suggest his engagement with the specific demands – sculptural, architectural, stylistic – of the commission? And, again, what might these sketches collectively tell us about Moore's conception of the 'ethics of a university education' at the end of the 1930s?

Though scant evidence remains in the way of written dialogue between Moore and Holden concerning the commission's demands, or even the pragmatic likelihood of the commission's resolution, these briefly outlined ideas provide us with an insight into his response to Holden's architectural project, to the commission's demands, and to Moore's understanding of the ways the mother and child theme might relate to a university setting. What feels important to declare unambiguously at this point is that in receiving Moore's plans in this way, we are registering them as just that, plans: works towards a commission that is concurrent, underway.

This avowal is an important one, for it problematizes the dating of the drawings to 1938, locating their origins after the completion of the building for which they were intended and to which they were intrinsically linked. Furthermore, the rapid progression of thought apparent from those earliest notes to what has been considered the final sketch suggests a development of the theme not present in the drawings themselves, especially given

Moore's propensity and ability to endlessly reinterpret an idea before conclusion?<sup>179</sup> Might we then be faced with a broader history for Moore's development of ideas towards the theme? One which might encompass rather than retroactively retrace those drawings of Irina suggested to have been drawn much earlier.

In an undated note from Holden's papers, held at the British Architectural Library, the most telling evocation of the architect's personal desire for sculptural reliefs might be found.

From the time of my appointment I have been made to face the committee's determination to resist any suggestion of sculpture on this building... But this matter of sculpture is another that cannot be indefinitely postponed + I now wish to bring it up for very serious consideration... I regard sculpture as indispensable in a great architectural work, and not just any sculpture by way of titivation + embroidery but as necessary to the rounding off + completion of the whole conception and in the same robust character + spirit of that conception. Sculpture, like architecture, for me means very much more than decoration... To omit the sculpture is to starve the architecture + is bound to reflect some discredit upon those responsible for its omission.<sup>180</sup>

From the tone of his concerns and his allusion to the commission as an on-going project, we might surmise that this note dates from the mid '30s, and certainly before the building's completion. Further, the suggestion seems to be that the sculptural commission remained, for him at least, a real possibility at the time of writing. So given that, out of the numerous sculptors proposed to Holden for the commission, only Moore appears to have worked on any drawings towards it, how might we chart Moore's work on the commission backwards from 1938 to locate them in relation to the building's construction, and what difference might doing so make to the discussion here?<sup>181</sup>

In his recollections of the commission in the '50s, Moore suggested that he might have spoken to Holden as early as 1934 about the commission. With Holden having begun work

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<sup>179</sup> See Richard Cork's discussion of the depth and variance of Moore's preparatory works for 55 Broadway, Cork, "Overhead Sculpture for the Underground Railway", pp.249-296

<sup>180</sup> Charles Holden, "Sculpture", undated, *The Adams Holden and Pearson Papers, Series 9: The University of London, 1931-1975*, RIBA Archive, AHP 7/15//1A. From the tone of Holden's note, we might surmise that it was written in the late 1930s when the building's completion appeared imminent, and when Moore's drawings are dated from.

<sup>181</sup> Other suggested sculptors noted in Karol included Charles Sargeant Jagger, Eric Gill, Maurice Lambert and J. F. Kavanaugh, whilst Frank Pick, the administrator of the London Underground, "somewhat strangely recommended three academic sculptors, William McMillan and Charles Wheeler or John Skeaping who could sculpt 'a pair of colossal horses at street level at the entrance to your internal courtyard [which] might be amusing, a sort of modern variation on the Nineveh business, which would suit your rather plain and weighty building'." Eitan Karol, *Charles Holden, Architect* (Shaun Tyas, Donington, 2007), pp.424-425; quoting Frank Pick, letter to E. Deller, typescript (23 January 1935) University of London Library Archives, Central File, CF1/39

on the building's design in 1931 and its construction being almost complete by 1937 – as evidenced in a photo from the University's archives (fig.14) – this seems plausible.<sup>182</sup>

[Holden] approached me again in 1934 and told me that there were places on Senate House Building – 50 to 60 ft. up – that needed sculpture. But again it was only reliefs that were wanted. We discussed it quite a lot and I even went so far as to make some models... Eight seated figures were wanted, on eight separate stones... The architect said that he would go ahead and put up the stones in case I altered my mind. The eight stones, cut to the proportions of my drawings, are there high up on the Senate House.<sup>183</sup>

The continued presence of the stones on the side of Senate House today appears to testify to this fact, though only six are apparent.<sup>184</sup>

The extent of Moore's actual correspondence with Holden regarding dimensions might remain unknown, but looking at the blocks in situ today at Senate House, four corresponding projections on the ribs of the building appear potentially in keeping with the dimensions that Moore's drawings suggest: four blocks of stone bearing the merest suggestion of human form, with the position of the head demarcated by a narrower extension to the stone at its upper edge. A fifth similarly sized square panel without any adjuncts faces the British Museum on Senate House's south side (fig.15) whilst a sixth, much smaller block sits just above the door at the north entrance to Senate House, similar in position to that of Epstein's reliefs for 55 Broadway (fig.16).

This suggestion that Moore might have first engaged with the commission earlier than is suggested appears borne out by four more sketchbook pages from the catalogue raisonné dated 1935, which appear to have been produced simultaneously with those otherwise attributed to 1938 (figs.17-20). The proposed alternative start date for Moore's work on the project fits in with the suggested relation of these sketches to drawings produced in 1934. All the sketches are on similarly sized paper, and the repetition of both formal motifs, sometimes almost exactly, and of self-directed notes concerning themes and ideas – and particularly the specific reference to 'education' on the recto of HMF1189 – appear to

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<sup>182</sup> Henry Moore, "Sculpture in the Open Air"; Photo of Senate House Construction 1937 from Senate House archives, UoL/CT3/4/2.

<sup>183</sup> Henry Moore, "Sculpture in the Open Air"

<sup>184</sup> Holden affirmed in a letter to a friend who enquired about the empty blocks a decade later only that "[t]here are 4 possible positions for reliefs in stone as you may have seen... [but] The University have always been very guarded in the matter of sculpture, knowing my previous 'escapades'." He was of course referring to the uproar surrounding his Epstein commissions. Correspondence between Holden and 'Inca' at Ayot St Lawrence, Herts, concerning sculpture for Senate House, 3 March – 7 April 1948, *AHP Papers, Series 9: The University of London, 1931-1975*, RIBA Archive, AHP 7/14/1-5



predicate their coincident or sequential ordering. Certainly, they suggest the origins, if not the continuation of a developmental thought process.

Look at the Picassoid still-life at the upper-left of the recto of the 1935 HMF1189 and compare it to its counterpart, centre-left on the verso of 1938's HMF1423. Or compare two images from the verso of HMF1183, the uppermost abstract form suggestive of a head and linked hands and the more developed, enthroned figure below it, with the top and middle-left boxes from HMF1420.<sup>185</sup> Of these latter forms, the first recalls the form of Moore's *Composition* in African Wonderstone from 1933 (fig.21) whilst the form of the enthroned seated figure both recalls, again, those life drawings of Irina, and pre-supposes notebook sketches for both the *Shelter Drawings* and Moore's *Madonna and Child*.

In the seven other studies presented on HMF1420, we find revisions of another *Composition* from 1931 in alabaster (fig.22), a *Reclining Figure* in reinforced concrete from 1933 (fig.23) and a variety of mother and child works from the beginning of the '30s.<sup>186</sup> These all appear alongside an abstracted still life somewhere between constructivism and a sort of cubism-lite. There is also the suggestion in the middle right-hand sketch of Barbara Hepworth's *Figure* of 1931 which Moore would have known from the collection of Margaret Gardiner who lived locally in Hampstead and was a friend of both artists (fig.24).<sup>187</sup>

The temporal oscillation of these referents across the 30s also suggests something of Moore's constant recourse to his own work, his use of sketchbooks as exactly that:

My drawings are done mainly as a help towards making sculpture – as a means of generating ideas for sculpture, tapping oneself for the initial idea; and as a way of sorting out ideas and developing them.<sup>188</sup>

To trace Moore's development of these forms throughout the mid- '30s is to find a plethora of related drawings all seemingly related to Moore's continued practice of life-drawing which destabilize any notion of Moore's shift towards abstraction or surrealism in the '30s before a return to figuration. The development of his work was always multi-faceted and heterogenous, with the interrelation of interpolated referents and ideas like a kaleidoscopic Venn diagram.

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<sup>185</sup> In the notes for HMF1183, Anne Garrould only went so far as to suggest a thematic link between the drawing: "The seated figures on the verso presage a number of future ideas, for example the 1938 drawings for projected sculptures on the Senate House of London University." HMF1183v

<sup>186</sup> See Chris Stephens (ed.), *Henry Moore*, exhibition (Tate Britain, London, 2010), pp.116-126

<sup>187</sup> The motif of hair bunched on one side of the head in Hepworth's *Figure* appeared and reappeared in Moore's work throughout the next fifteen or so years.

<sup>188</sup> Henry Moore, "The Sculptor Speaks", pp.338-340

But turning our attention back to Moore's notes for the commission, what we find in these drawings is not a shift in the *style* of Moore's approach but, potentially, a shift in his thinking *about* his approach and about his use of style, or at least a consolidation of his self-conception. The occasion of the commission allowed that.

Between those drawings of Irina dated collectively to the turn of 1934 and Moore's allusions to the collections of the British Museum, and between Moore's brief attention to abstraction as a possibility for the commission and his invocation of contemporaries such as Hepworth and Picasso, then – think also of Picasso's mighty neo-classical women of the early '20s with relation to his depictions of Irina (fig.25) – we find effective renditions of his full recourse to the broader practice of his learning: in classrooms, in galleries, in bookshops, among friends.<sup>189</sup> The divergent array of signifiers stands in suitably for the variety of means to visual culture available to Moore in the '20s and '30s.

And let us not forget Moore's conception of the signifying role of books in his designs for the Senate House reliefs, represented pictorially and linguistically throughout the associated sketchbook pages. Visual histories were central to his development and his self-education, from his discovery of Roger Fry whilst still at Leeds to his self-tutelage in the V&A library whilst at the Royal College, and from his numerous visits to Zwemmers bookshop on the Charing Cross Road to his accumulation of enough books in his lifetime to compose an extensive personal library. The act of reading, or more approximately, looking, as the case seems to have been, was for Moore the means to both self-improvement and self-understanding.

Garrett Stewart has written a considerable volume on visual representations of the 'act of reading' concerned, in part, with conceptualising the "difference between verbal and visual duration", but more particularly with identifying the nature of those representations in relation to their cultural grounding. That is, the place of print culture in the social context of its depiction.<sup>190</sup> However, receiving Moore's works as drawings *for* sculpture, and sculptures for the side of a library no less, presents a different set of questions. These aren't so much representations of the private act of reading which is the focus of much of Stewart's work, but totemic symbols for the power of knowledge. Moore's reading women speak of reading as education, and education as process. This is not the act of looking, or of reading, but of learning.

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<sup>189</sup> A sketch dated 1932 titled 'Half-Figure' (HMF911), similarly, appears closely aligned to portraits from Picasso's pre-cubist period, the works which pre-figured *les Femelles d'Avignon* in 1907.

<sup>190</sup> Garrett Stewart, *The Look of Reading: Book, Painting, Text* (University of Chicago Press, London, 2006), p.25

But beyond the drawings' manifestation of Moore's education as process, how might we directly trace his consideration of the particularities of the commission both theoretical and architectural. Perhaps the clearest indication of Moore's cognition of his work's relation to Holden's broader architectural scheme is the repetition in his notebook pages of the form of his *West Wind* for 55 Broadway (fig.26) amongst the figures populating HMF1188. It is there, in Moore's most deliberate articulation of his recourse to the specifics of both the commission and his conception of his artistic relationship with Holden that we might return to the building itself.

Throughout the sketchbook pages for the commission Moore scribbled down notes apparently pertaining to the full function of the university campus being built; equations symbolising scientific thinking alongside books ostensibly representing the humanities, whilst art is alluded to with the inclusion of palettes and background details such as wall frames. Indicative annotations refer on more than one occasion to his conception of which forms and signifiers might adequately stand in for "education or of arts, sciences, or life mixed with Education."<sup>191</sup> Moore's thinking appears to be aligned with the breadth of studies to be available in a reconciled University, as well as the fuller function of the University itself.<sup>192</sup>

Holden had been tasked with designing a new campus for the University of London, re-housing affiliated colleges of the University such as the Institute of Historical Research, the Birkbeck Institute, and the School of Oriental Studies as it was then alongside the university's library and its administrative centre.<sup>193</sup> The purpose, directed and pushed for by the University's Vice Chancellor, William Beveridge, elected in 1926, was to relocate the University's constituent parts in order to rationalise its organisational structure and in the process provide London with a physically identifiable university to match Cambridge or Oxford.

In a speech to the London Society in 1928, shortly after a consolidated site for the University was secured in Bloomsbury, Beveridge offered up a vision for the university

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<sup>191</sup> HMF1418 verso; HMF1420

<sup>192</sup> The demand for a central campus for the University of London resulted from its formal constitution as a federal consortium of 'schools' in the early twentieth century, bringing together an assortment of universities, institutes, specialist and technical colleges which collectively occupied and served eight 'faculties' for study. Negley Harte, *The University of London 1836-1986: An Illustrated History* (The Athlone Press, London, 1986)

<sup>193</sup> "To this new mega-campus would come Birkbeck College from Fetter Lane; the Courtauld Institute from Portman Square; the Institute of Archaeology from Regent's Park and the Institute of Education from Southampton Row. S.S.E.E.S would come from King's; S.O.A.S would come from Finsbury Circus; and the University Library, Senate House and Ceremonial Hall would come from South Kensington..." J. Mordaunt Crook, "The Architectural Image" in F. M. L. Thompson (ed.), *The University of London and the World of Learning 1836-1986* (The Hambledon Press, London, 1990), p.24-25

comparable to the shape of Moore's thoughts.<sup>194</sup> He envisaged that the chosen architect would

have to remember, and in his design should recall to us, the clear cut relevance of science, the light-heartedness and solemnity of youth, the enchanted garden of the arts...

He continued,

The central symbol of the University on the Bloomsbury site can not fittingly look like an imitation of any other University, it must not be a replica from the middle ages. It should be something that could not have been built in any earlier generation than this, and can only be at home in London.<sup>195</sup>

More succinctly, perhaps, Beveridge wrote in an article for *The Times*: "Nothing shall be built on the Bloomsbury site that is not beautiful. Nothing shall be built that is not characteristic of London and of this age."<sup>196</sup> The appropriation of the Bloomsbury site meant everything to such a conceptualisation. It had been identified as the desired site for a unified University from as far back as the start of the century, with various ideas proposed in this intervening period. The proximity of the British Museum which still incorporated the British Library was from very early on considered the location's trump card.<sup>197</sup>

Beveridge's early thoughts on, and hopes for, the campus-to-be appear to have been fleshed out in the 'instructions relating to an architectural design' drafted in 1929 by Henry V. Lanchester, president of the Royal Institute of British Architects. Lanchester, appointed as architectural consultant to the University of London, was asked to "identify the needs of the University and to suggest a schematic layout for the new buildings required."<sup>198</sup> The most telling passage concerned with the commission's desired form from Lanchester's 'instructions', which in turn might bring us back to the relation of the building to Moore's conception of it, goes as follows:

While it would be undesirable to attempt to outline specifically the type of design

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<sup>194</sup> The site was secured as the result of funding from the Rockefeller Foundation to the tune of £400,000. Crook, "The Architectural Image", p.22. Karol, *Charles Holden, Architect*, p.196

<sup>195</sup> Sir William Beveridge, "The physical relation of a university to a city", a lecture to the London Society, 16 November 1928 [printed for the Society]; quoted in Richard Simpson, "Classicism and Modernity: The University of London's Senate House", *Bulletin of the Institute of Classical Studies*, Vol. 43, Issue 1, December 1999, p.44

<sup>196</sup> Anon, "The New London University – Sir W. Beveridge on Plans for Bloomsbury", *The Times*, Nov 17, 1928, p.8

<sup>197</sup> '[T]he British Museum [Library] should be to the University of London what the Bodleian is to Oxford', *Westminster Gazette*, 6 August 1913; quoted in Crook, "The Architectural Image", p.17

<sup>198</sup> Karol, *Charles Holden, Architect*, p.392

to be adopted, this should fulfil conceptions in accord with the cultivation of the arts and sciences; it should be clear-cut but not harsh, dignified but not ponderous, graceful but not florid. It would be unwise to indicate the degree to which traditional forms might be considered appropriate, but any departure from these should have a strictly logical basis, and not suggest a fashion inappropriate to buildings which will house an institution so permanent as a university.<sup>199</sup>

Lanchester's hope was for a building which reflected and complemented the "Portland stone grandeur of the British Museum, and not the modest brick Georgian terraces" more common in Bloomsbury.<sup>200</sup> But the campus' proposed location effortlessly fostered dialogue with all of its surroundings, adopting and reflecting the associated implications of academicism and empiricism, of history *and* of contemporaneity – the Bloomsbury group's proximity being an inevitable parallel – and of the legacies and the lessons of Empire.<sup>201</sup> As S. D. Adshead, Professor of Town Planning at UCL wrote after early considerations of the suitability of the area for a reconstituted university; "Bloomsbury is inherently and fundamentally the intellectual pivot, not only of London, but of the Empire."<sup>202</sup>

So how did Holden attempt to respond to these concerns, stylistically and materially? Firstly, we might surmise that Beveridge, along with the University's Principal Edwin Deller who together headed the Committee assembled to select a suitable architect, found in Holden's practice and style the complement of those conditions identified. His invocation of traditional forms and his favouring of traditional materials were suited to the desired notes of permanence and tradition, notions of which were already written into the geography of the site. On the other hand, but equally suited to the commission, Holden's inferred transmission of the architectural modernity of American cities with the construction of such a monumental central tower stood in for the might of London in interwar Europe, its position as the capital of the Empire. The implication is of London's equal status alongside

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<sup>199</sup> "University of London Bloomsbury site: instructions relating to an architectural design", typescript (1931) University of London Library archives, Central File, CF1/31/583.

<sup>200</sup> Karol, *Charles Holden: Architect*, p.397

<sup>201</sup> Writing on the Bloomsbury Group's anti-imperial attitudes, Gretchen Gerzina has pointed to an important contradiction between the manner in which they presented their ideas and their recourse to a broad experience of empire traced contextually through their upbringing and, more simply, the circumstance of their time and place. Having noted that "ambiguity was at the heart of Modernism itself, which used fragmentation, primitivism, and myth to express its new views on culture and morality", she suggests that they "rejected empire while embracing the forms of Modernism that grew out of that rejection". Something of that contradiction might be implicitly present in the dialogues fostered by Holden's work too, and even more subtly in Moore's recourse to the prevailing narratives that surrounded the Bloomsbury campus. Gretchen Holbrook Gerzina, "Bloomsbury and Empire" in Victoria Rosner (ed.), *The Cambridge Companion to The Bloomsbury Group* (Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 2004), pp.112-127

<sup>202</sup> S.D. Adshead, *Vincula*, vol. ii, 1926, p. 174; quoted in Crook, "The Architectural Image", p.17

the new metropolises; exactly what the consolidation of the University of London into a central site was intended to reflect.

The next question, then, regards the extent to which Moore's designs participated in that direction of intent? We might productively conceive of Moore's sketches towards the commission in relation to Lanchester's aspiration for a building 'dignified but not ponderous, graceful but not florid', and towards buildings 'which will house an institution so permanent as a university'? Certainly, the similarity here between inflections in Moore's notes towards the Senate House commission and the 'instructions relating to an architectural design' drafted by Lanchester point persuasively to Moore's awareness of them, if not his direct recourse to them.

Moore's drawings of seated figures towards the commission, compositionally tight and solid, and traceable thematically through the history of representational art, speak closely to Lanchester's concerns also. His evocation of archaic sculptures at the British Museum and of Egyptian sarcophagi via Epstein speak of a millennia wide treatment of the female form and of the ebbs and flows in the history of European civilisation, as well as the circumstances of Moore's access to the visual data which renders this complicated story legible; the awkward crossover between Empire and the empirical.

Sarah Turner has drawn attention to the frequent absence of the "cultural context of colonialism" in histories of modern British sculpture, noting the frequency with which "formal, aesthetic and stylistic correspondences alone" have been prioritised in the literature.<sup>203</sup> As an alternative, she proposes to follow Penelope Curtis' admonition to re-situate British sculpture in its "international context"; being more than simply a European one.<sup>204</sup>

This 'international context' includes a recognition not only of the cosmopolitan constituency of the chief practitioners of sculptural modernism in Britain... but also of the intersections of imperialism with the sculptural life of Britain.<sup>205</sup>

To equate Moore's engagement with not only the collections of the British and the Victoria & Albert Museums – both "imperial projects" – but their libraries too, presented in forms

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<sup>203</sup> Sarah Victoria Turner, "Stone, Sex and Empire: Direct Carving and 'British' Sculpture" in Penelope Curtis and Keith Wilson (ed.), *Modern British Sculpture*, exhibition (Royal Academy of Arts, London, 2011), pp.100-105

<sup>204</sup> Turner, "Stone, Sex and Empire", p.101; quoting Penelope Curtis, "How Direct Carving Stole the Idea of Modern British Sculpture" in David J. Getsy (ed.), *Sculpture and the Pursuit of a Modern Ideal in Britain, c.1880-1930* (Lund Humphries, Aldershot, 2004), pp.291-319

<sup>205</sup> Though Moore was far from representative of that 'cosmopolitan constituency' by birth, his close involvement with the émigré artists active in North London and his marriage to a Russian woman gesture towards the social make-up of his circles of influence. Turner, "Stone, Sex and Empire", p.101

considered pertinent to the study of the arts and the sciences, suggests both Moore's conception of the shape of the University of London for which his works were intended *and* the nature of knowledge as it existed therein: heterogeneous, multi-faceted. It is there that the question of Moore's espousal of the 'ethics of a University education' might come to the fore as a point of discussion.

Of the role of the museum in the definition and ordering of knowledge, Lewis Mumford wrote in an essay for *Circle*:

The museum gives us a means of coping with the past, of having intercourse with other periods and other modes of life, without confining our activities to the mould created by the past. Starting itself as a chance accumulation of relics, with no more rhyme or reason than the city itself, the museum at last presents itself to use (sic) as a means of selectively preserving the memorials of culture...<sup>206</sup>

Mumford's argument is concerned with positing a living culture built around conceptions of evolution and renewal rather than one confined within static monuments to the past:

continuity for us exists, not in the individual soul, but in the germ plasm and in the social heritage, through which we are united to all mankind and all nature: renewal comes in the sacrifice of the parent to the child, in the having lived to the living and the yet-to-live. Instead of being oriented towards death and fixity, we are oriented towards life and change: every stone has become ironic to us for we know that it, too, is in process of change, like the 'everlasting' mountains: time is a bomb that will split the most august temple open, if the wanton savagery of men's swifter bombs does not anticipate time.<sup>207</sup>

Thus might we conceptualise Moore's monuments to/of mothers and children as caught up in Mumford's language of cyclical development, ironically charged and representative of the particular resonance of education and inheritance at a time when the future seemed less than certain. And beyond the transcultural insinuations of Moore's work, the temporal deviance of a work summoning up and paying testament to episodic moments in the world history of art speaks across pronouncements of wild, primitive expression, nationalised neo-romantic submission and attestations of internationalised adherence to the abstract-concrete or canonically-oriented classicisms in favour of an integration and counter-balancing of such ideas.

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<sup>206</sup> Lewis Mumford, "The Death of the Monument" in *Circle*, p.267

<sup>207</sup> Ibid, p.264

Moore was neither the first nor the last to work in this way: the most obvious and well-established example might be found throughout the wealth of recent exhibitions that have pitted Picasso up against the artists he sought out to compete with or those who followed him: Ingres, Degas, 'Modern British Art', 'the Spanish tradition'.<sup>208</sup> It has become a recognisable trope to sidle one artist up against another in order to explore their commensurability. Similarly, as I write this chapter Moore is being exhibited in relation to both Auguste Rodin and Francis Bacon.<sup>209</sup> The results, though fascinating and well presented, making for great exhibitions, appear decidedly one-dimensional in the context of Moore's true performativity. Turner's proposition is central to the inadequacy of these arguments. But pointing in the direction of the extent of these artists' referents suggests both the nature of internationalised artistic communities in which they were working and the cultural imbrication that was enabled by the development and dissemination of visual cultures in the period in which they were creating.

More interesting and least developed might be an art history that reflects and rejoices in the sort of chaotic presentations of cultural output identifiable in the pages of art journals of the '30s and '40s where divergent referents were juxtaposed with reckless abandon: one which builds upon that visual tradition in a way that fluidly and appropriately reflects that visual disquiet.

In Julia Kelly's review of Moore's engagement with surrealism, read through his presence in French periodicals of the '30s, she noted the significance of the formal lessons found therein on Moore's development whilst identifying the artist's reluctance to align himself with any movement.<sup>210</sup> Among the French journals referred to, Kelly's discussion of *Documents*, in particular – the 'dissident' surrealist journal edited by Georges Bataille – suggests a framework from which to understand this multi-faceted approach to visual cultural form.

The human body in *Documents*, through reproductions of paintings, sculptures, photographs and illuminated manuscripts from several centuries, became, in its deformed and defamiliarised state, a vehicle for questioning European conventions of figurative representation – particularly within a Christian tradition – and a way of

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<sup>208</sup> *Picasso-Ingres*, exhibition (Musée Picasso, Paris, 2004); *Picasso Looks at Degas*, exhibition (Clark Art Institute, Williamstown, MA, 2010); *Picasso and Modern British Art*, exhibition (Tate Britain, London, 2012); Jonathan Brown (ed.), *Picasso and the Spanish Tradition* (Yale University Press, London, 1996)

<sup>209</sup> *Moore Rodin*, exhibition (Henry Moore Foundation, Perry Green, 2013); *Francis Bacon Henry Moore: Flesh and Bone*, exhibition (Ashmolean Museum of Art, Oxford, 2013-14)

<sup>210</sup> Julia Kelly, "The Unfamiliar Figure: Henry Moore in French Periodicals of the 1930s", in *Henry Moore: Critical Essays*, p.57



exploring the unacceptable undersides of physical form: the ugly, the dirty, the taboo, the disturbing.<sup>211</sup>

She treats Moore's distortions of the human form in the '30s as representative of an engagement with this direction of thought, though her discussion of Moore is largely concerned with comparing his work to his West European counterparts rather than the broader iconography employed in these journals.

Having defined the extent of Moore's visual vocabulary as participatory of a continent-wide questioning of form, however, Kelly goes on to suggest that Moore's post-war work would lose that deconstructive quality as a result of the shifts in Moore's term of reference, or in his application thereof, writing:

By the time of the sculptor's first one-man exhibition in Paris in 1949, the same year of his success at the Venice Biennale, a sort of universalism gleaned from the amalgamated artistic tradition served to account for his work...

The frayed edges and ambiguous meanings of Moore's 1930s sculpture, the potential transgressive implications of his manipulations of form and of the human figure, which the presentation of his work within various forums in Paris and indeed London had emphasised, had been smoothed over and suppressed.<sup>212</sup>

I would argue that a 'universalism' learnt from an amalgamation of 'artistic tradition' suggests a continuation of the same line of thinking. But in Kelly's desire to locate Moore's more experimental and challenging works in relation to surrealism and to avant-garde 'forums', she finds his apparent turn away from surrealist impetus as representative of a turn away from the vanguard, implicitly suggesting that both representational art and public art were incapable of being 'transgressive'. What's more, to suggest that a smoothing over of 'transgressive' motifs is tantamount to suppressing them is highly problematic.

In the conclusion to his work on Moore's drawings, Causey suggestively identified, without elaboration, an affinity between Moore's post-war figuration and Picasso's representational turn after the First World War. The latter has been written as part of a 'call to order' in French art, or a turn towards the status quo informed by the prevailing nationalistic attitudes that came in the fall out of the war. It was to that turn that Causey compared Moore's works, suggesting that Moore's renditions of "mother and child earlier, and

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<sup>211</sup> Kelly, "The Unfamiliar Figure", p.49

<sup>212</sup> Ibid, p. 62

parents and children now” formed part of the “healing process” necessary after war.<sup>213</sup> This ‘healing process’ appears implicitly both social and cultural, a pulling away from the dangerous experiments of the pre-war period. To incite the ‘call to order’ is to suggest a fundamental conservatism in Moore’s approach.

However, it has long been accepted that the nationalistically-aligned canonical turn of French modernists in the ‘20s was less than simple, as defined by Kenneth Silver when he asked resonantly

How could the various forms of pre-war art that had been deliberately provocative, often ironic, and usually iconoclastic become serious, measured, and simplified? How could art be nationalist if produced by a heterogeneous group of cosmopolitans?<sup>214</sup>

In Silver’s thoroughgoing analysis of French art in the ‘20s, he discussed the extent to which modern artists working in the context of a post-(First World) War world succeeded in reconciling the demands of a reformulated social hierarchy with their own artistic impetuses through a canny application of form that was, at its root, self-interested.

More pertinently still, Silver suggested of Picasso’s ‘mother and child’ works of the ‘20s referred to previously:

It is probably true that had it not been for the birth of Paul, Picasso would not have created his numerous “mother and child” pictures of the early 1920s; but had it not been for the officially sanctioned significance of the theme, making the *maternités* specially meaningful for his French audience at that moment, Picasso might well have been satisfied with a strictly private artistic record of his newborn child and not gone on to create these images of ‘the human species’, classicized testimonials to the fecundity of the race.<sup>215</sup>

The point appears to echo Sylvester’s description of the way Moore’s *Shelter Drawings* appeared a natural extension of his formal concerns. Of course Moore’s interest in the theme was always more prominent in his oeuvre than in Picasso’s, and less directly to do with personal experience whatever the biographers may suggest. But the ways in which he shifted his thematic interest in line with demands for an art representing humanity, and in form comprehensible to an expanding audience, appears usefully analogous.

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<sup>213</sup> Causey, *The Drawings of Henry Moore*, p.136

<sup>214</sup> Kenneth Silver, *Esprit de Corps: The Art of the Parisian Avant-garde and the First World War, 1914-25* (Thames and Hudson, London, 1989), p.58

<sup>215</sup> Ibid, p.282

However, if the humanism of Moore's representational turn is to be cast in relation to his thinking through 'the ethics of university education', and in relation to world cultures presented visually via the British Museum and experienced socially, to a point, in the internationalised community of pre-war London, then Kelly's identification of a subsequent 'universalism' in his work might more successfully represent that heterogeneity than her calls for 'frayed edges and ambiguous meanings' which only serve to suggest disruption and difference.

Building on Silver's argument, Alexandra Parigoris has suggested the use-value of pastiche as a "framework from which to study the manipulation of 'tradition'" by modernists during the 'call to order', writing:

What is clear is that once the issue of parody is raised, the relationship between form and content becomes complex, as also does the relationship between work and audience, which makes it no longer possible to confine one's reading of an image... to a single level inherent in the form.<sup>216</sup>

Here might we see the counter of Moore's apparent 'smoothing over' of form, where the extent of Moore's referents presented coincidentally on the surface of a work opens his work up to various readings, and with numerous connotations both artistic and social.

Though writers such as Fuller have attempted to locate Moore's turn to a sort of realism in line with a prevailing "British, Romantic" tradition, "his achievement... realised largely against the grain of modernity", the extent of these references and Moore's potentially subversive employment of them suggests a negotiation of the British traditions of art, of empire and of cultural interchange representative unambiguously of both modernism and modernity.<sup>217</sup>

More successful in a reading of the breath of Moore's inferences, then, is Lichtenstern's wide-ranging examination of Moore's work which approaches the full gamut of his stylistic repertoire with a sufficiently broad brush to account for its full heterogeneity.<sup>218</sup> The chapters of her book compartmentalise Moore's successes into varying overlapping frameworks, appreciating the disharmonious layering of style and subject in his oeuvre.

Lyndsey Stonebridge came closest to defining that which I am alluding to when she remarked succinctly that Moore's Northampton Madonna "betrays little of its vertiginous

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<sup>216</sup> Alexandra Parigoris, "Pastiche and the Use of Tradition 1917-22", *On Classic Ground*, exhibition (Tate Gallery, London, 1990), p.299

<sup>217</sup> Fuller, "Henry Moore: An English Romantic", p.38

<sup>218</sup> Lichtenstern, *Henry Moore: Work – Theory – Impact*

facsimile origins, but is rather a monument to a fantasy about security and permanence.”<sup>219</sup>

This off-hand remark gestures towards an identification of the success of Moore’s public works in this period, and I will return to this point with specific relation to the Madonna in chapter four. What matters here is the specific identification of Moore’s multi-referentiality, and the idea that the work somehow cancels out that narrative in favour of a ‘fantasy about security’; Causey’s ‘healing process’. This is central to its success as a public work, and is true, to varying extents, for all the works discussed in this thesis.

Underlying all this is the most determinative element of Moore’s artistic deception: this seamless integration of opposing elements when traced onto their sculptural surface otherwise ostensibly coherent. For where the picture plane, and even more noticeably the collaged picture plane alludes to a level of deception ripe for unravelling, the ‘fantasy of security and permanence’ is written on the surface of rock and stone, and into the three-dimensional surface which is implicitly whole, singular.

In Moore’s movement away from the subtractive practice of carving towards the additive practice of modelling, and of drawing and painting in multimedia, Moore engaged with the domain of deceit, of artifice, controlled by the want of the artist. In calculatedly exposing himself and his practice to a greater amount of potential sculptural languages as a result of the qualities of bronze and of modelling and casting that he had deprived himself of in the pursuit of direct carving, the full breadth of Moore’s artistic vernacular found a voice, or at least the opportunity to speak, in his work.

Moore’s material choices as much as his thematic ones have been located in the intervening years as an indication, if not a confirmation, of his non-progressiveness. Even his adoption of bronze in the 1940s was quickly rendered outdated with the encroaching engagement with steel, with multimedia, and with plastics by his contemporaries. Most significantly, perhaps, Anne Wagner identified Clement Greenberg’s “once crucial formalist paradigm” as the beginning of this critical rejection: Greenberg, who only acknowledged Moore twice in his entire and lengthy body of writing, set the tone for a denunciation of Moore based on his ‘attachment to the past.’<sup>220</sup>

In a review of Moore’s 1947 Museum of Modern Art retrospective, a show suffuse with the works that bridge the period of my investigation, Greenberg pilloried Moore’s work thus:

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<sup>219</sup> Lyndsey Stonebridge, “Bombs, birth and trauma: Henry Moore’s and D. W. Winnicott’s prehistory figments” in *Henry Moore: Critical Essays*, p.111

<sup>220</sup> Wagner, *Mother Stone*, p.12; Clement Greenberg, “Art”, *The Nation*, No.164, Issue 6 (8 February 1947), pp.164-165, reproduced in John O’Brian (ed.), *Clement Greenberg: The Collected Essays and Criticism: Volume 2: Arrogant Purpose 1945-1949* (University of Chicago Press, London, 1986), pp.125-128

Henry Moore's sculpture represents a stage about halfway between the classical and the new, a stage, also, where modern sculpture becomes peculiarly obsessed with the archaic and the primitive ... He remains traditional in so far as he restricts his media largely to wood, fieldstone, bronze, and lead, and insists on 'fidelity' to the respective nature of these materials. His large figures, invariably reclining and almost invariably derived from the female form, demonstrate his attachment to the past more obviously than do his smaller pieces, and the final effect, even in the latter, somehow discounts the actual presence of modernist calligraphy and detail, to leave with the impression, hard to define but nevertheless definite, of something not too far from classical statuary.<sup>221</sup>

What *was* this "modernist calligraphy" identified by Greenberg? Something recognisable; somehow sealed off from history? Something demonstrable, or something definable by critics? And what might it mean to represent a stage "halfway" between two such chronologically and contextually disparate periods as the classical and the new in the context of mid-century Britain/Europe? To fit into neither, or to occupy a temporal space three millennia wide? Certainly, Moore's works deviate referentially across the full spectrum of art's histories, but does that dislodge their attestations of modernity?

This span of time better reflects Moore's developmental approach to artistic endeavour than suggestions of ruptures and shifts. His endless self-repetition, and his recycling and reworking of ideas allowed for the accumulation of signifiers in his work even when not immediately visible. Across the pages of his notebooks there appear and re-appear numerous ideas played out and practised by Moore.

The argument I am presenting is concerned with identifying Moore's artistic production in a longer trajectory that the one Greenberg sought to espouse, and explaining the significance of Moore's actions in relation to their purpose: a purpose – in Moore's as in all public work – resolutely integrated into the work's singular and particular account of their contextual contemporaneity. And that context must be recognised as not only shifting and uncertain, but part of the continuum that is Moore's career, and necessarily developmental.

David Getsy has discussed the extent to which Greenberg's criticism of Moore's artistic approach were informed by a broader opposition to Herbert Read's prioritisation of him as the exemplary sculptor of his particular version of 'modernism'. Getsy describes the oppositional impetuses of the two critics approaches to a definition of modernism in

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<sup>221</sup> Greenberg, "Art", *The Nation*, No.164, Issue 6 (8 February 1947), p.164

relation to the binary of tactuality (Read) and opticality (Greenberg, for whom the 'exemplary modernist sculptor' was David Smith). But in doing so, Getsy addressed the myopia of their respective angles, writing:

There is little to be gained by adjudicating this match. Both Read and Greenberg took their judgements about the primacy of the tactile or the optical as axiomatic, and both entrenched themselves in partisan and teleological accounts. The underlying concern for both was to write a history of sculpture that prioritised their favourite artists – Moore or Smith – making them appear as if they were the necessary and logical conclusion to the evolution of modern art.<sup>222</sup>

In designating Moore's public works in distinction from both Read and Greenberg's pronouncements on them, or rather in relation to the underlying principles of both accounts but without an underwritten prioritisation of either theoretical model, I hope to move away from such a unitary engagement with the trappings of the avant-garde, placing the works solely in the domain of their context and their publics.

Tracing works *into* the public domain in this way presupposes the importance of receiving the materiality of each work as conditioned by their intended location and their patron's desires. And reading public works with a view to their public performativity necessitates a rendition of their legibility. The artist's intentionality here comes down to a simple question of their engagement with both the immediate and the extended life of the proposed work. In the context of the particular English political framework in question, we must also consider whether the artist intends the *work* to speak freely, or if it is intended as a manifestation of their *own* ability to speak freely, or both?

In a history of the architectural image of the University of London, Mordaunt Crook offered a reading of Senate House's stylistic faults which is similar in essence to Greenberg's reading of Moore's shortcomings. Countering the architect's attested aspiration towards timelessness with his building, Mordaunt Crook suggests, alternatively, that "in every line and every shape it bespeaks the eye of the 1930s. Its design was a compromise between classicism and modernity... a product of necessity... [and] was supposed to be England's answer to the American skyscraper." But, he concludes, "today – incomplete, marooned, melancholy as a beached whale – the Senate House seems timeless for all the wrong

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<sup>222</sup> David J. Getsy, "Tacticality or Opticality, Henry Moore or David Smith: Herbert Read and Clement Greenberg on *The Art of Sculpture*, 1956", in Rebecca Peabody (ed.), *Anglo-American Exchange in Postwar Sculpture, 1945-1975* (Getty Research Institute, Los Angeles, 2011), pp.105-121

reasons.”<sup>223</sup> This later reading, supported by hindsight and not lumbered with the weight of political determinacy, is able and willing to distinguish between pre-war purposiveness and post-war revisionism, and gestures, almost imperceptibly, towards a much broader artistic discussion of the period which must mark any discussion of the artistic products of this era: the location and the agency of figuration in the 1940s, and the shifting perception thereof. Relocating the origins of this building’s design, and thus the intended artworks for it, into the first half of the ‘30s, and reading the results publicly rather than with a view to their avant-garde credentials, is essential. There, the relation – and the distinction – between classicism and modernism was on a different register.

The *non*-Americanness of the building is important too, to be read in tandem with an excavation of the breadth of European influents: a rendition of architectural style, and artistic endeavour, as part of a historical continuum to do with empire, with mass communications, and with visual cultures, and similarly divorced from attestations of contemporaneity (though their relation to the continuum of Modernity is also central to these points).

Maxwell Fry criticised Holden’s material choices for Senate House as an “anachronism, without substantial or valid emotion” in his 1944 publication *Fine Building*.<sup>224</sup> In response, Holden described this concern with contemporaneity as the will of those “too concerned with the swing of the pendulum and not enough concerned with the progress of the hourhand.”<sup>225</sup> The issue of artistic and emotional ‘validity’ here is presented by Fry as being bound by one’s adherence to a developmental, unidirectional sense of artistic (and thus historical) expression rather than one appropriately – especially in the ‘30s – marked by the sporadic and confused passage of time and purpose in the long march of history.

Fry, the erstwhile secretary of the Modern Architectural Research Group (MARS) and one of the architects of the Impington Village College (to be discussed in chapter five), was affecting the voice of an architectural movement self-appointed as the purveyors and the instigators of modern design. The MARS group had, throughout the 1930s, undertaken a project of forward planning for a reconstruction of Britain’s cities along functionalist and socially predicated lines, and which was self-conceptualised as “frankly Utopian and

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<sup>223</sup> in Mordaunt Crook, “The Architectural Image”, pp.25-27; quoting *The Architect & Building News*, vol. cxlviii, 1936, p.306

<sup>224</sup> Maxwell Fry, *Fine Building* (Faber and Faber, London, 1944), p.127

<sup>225</sup> Karol, *Charles Holden, Architect*, p.429

Socialistic in concept.”<sup>226</sup> But Holden, self-diagnosed as an ‘anarchist communist’ in his early life and strongly affected by the writings of Walt Whitman in particular, was not immune to the power of art, and in his case architecture, to pronounce and account for one’s personal philosophy and political persuasion.<sup>227</sup> For Holden, as for Moore, such pronouncements of one’s persona couldn’t be relayed merely through material means, but were rather enacted in the whole schema of their artistic visions. Holden’s response to Fry read:

I have not propounded a system for all to follow, I have not tried to invent a style, or a system of construction. My sole concern was to provide my clients (without control or direction on their part) with as far as may be a trouble free, an internally flexible building capable of long service proportionate to the life time of a university. And what is the lifetime of a university?<sup>228</sup>

In hindsight, the stone monumentality of Senate House appears to wear its age more comfortably than say, the steel and concrete modernism of the Institute of Education which neighbours it across Russell Square, or even the extension to Senate House’s south-east corner which now disguises one of the four stony outcrops that might have borne Moore’s works. Its comfortable dialogue with the British Museum opposite runs as smoothly as was initially hoped for, and the monumental elevations of Senate House, disguised behind lines of plane trees, even complement the ‘modest brick Georgian terraces’ opposite given their underlying material commonalities in a way that the steel and glass of the Institute of Education cannot.

Returning to the lessons of 55 Broadway, Holden wrote in a series of reflective notes concerning the ‘place of sculpture in architecture’ from 1953:

Today these figures takes their place as part of the street architecture with hardly ever a glance, or a comment or a word of condemnation – they are part of history in time and place – and they give the right note of emphasis and embellishment that the building needed and which in my opinion was the duty of the Client to the public *to provide* (his italics)... If this can be applied to a public transport building how much more should it be applied to a University responsible for furthering the

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<sup>226</sup> Arthur Korn, Maxwell Fry and Dennis Sharp, “The M.A.R.S. Plan for London”, *Perspecta* vol. 13/14 (1971), p.163

<sup>227</sup> Mordaunt Crook, “The Architectural Image”, p. 24; quoting “Obituary”, *The Architect & Building News*, vol. ccxvii, 1960, p.592

<sup>228</sup> Charles Holden, “Copy of a letter by Holden to Maxwell Fry [architect], c/o Faber and Faber at Russell Square [London]”, 2 May 1944, *Adams Holden & Pearson Papers, Series 9: The University of London, 1931-1975*, RIBA Archive, AHP 7/13/1



cultural ideas of our time and showing faith in our own generation – or is it that the period of gestation in a University is so longer (sic) that nothing can ever be contemporary! <sup>229</sup>

Speaking of his intentions during a tour of the Senate House shortly after its completion, Holden proclaimed

It must be admitted, whatever may be our views on education, that a university exists for a high purpose and it has been our endeavour to give expression to that high purpose in the design + construction of this building... As I see it the primary purpose of a university is to assist the students to think clearly, to appreciate the contribution of tradition to the knowledge of fundamental truth, to sift the living from the dead in the traditional thought + forms as we meet them today, to freely + courageously discard those traditional elements which have no living hold on our own world and to learn one of the greatest of all lessons of the past – to adventure as they adventured, to explore the unknown as they explored the unknown and to find in the end that the greatest discovery of all is just that the simple truth (which lies immediately to our hand) more than any fantasy, is the source of all vital inspiration. <sup>230</sup>

Pevsner appeared to recognize something of Holden's intentions early on when he referred to Senate House's style as a sort of "undecided modernism", and "strangely semi-traditional" in his architectural survey of London. <sup>231</sup> And yet in the short term those stylistic implications, caught between 'classicism' and 'modernism' as Greenberg asserted, were rendered problematic, and demanding explanation, justification. For by the time of the building's completion and subsequent use, the shape of Holden's response, that sort of monumental, modernised neo-classicism, was "thought inappropriate to the Georgian character of Bloomsbury and too reminiscent of the architecture of the totalitarian regimes of the 1930s." <sup>232</sup>

In the introduction to a volume concerned with addressing the continued absence of totalitarian art from histories of modernism, even as "both contemporary art practice and

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<sup>229</sup> Charles Holden, "Notes arguing for use sculpture on University Buildings", July 1953, from Holden Papers, AHP7/15/1-6, RIBA Archive, V&A.

<sup>230</sup> Charles Holden, "Notes [by Holden, for an address to be given by him to the Court of the University whilst giving a tour of the building], [1938], AHP7/9/1, RIBA Archive, V&A

<sup>231</sup> [http://www.cityofsound.com/blog/2003/11/senate\\_house\\_un.html](http://www.cityofsound.com/blog/2003/11/senate_house_un.html), reference to Pevsner's guide to London.

<sup>232</sup> Karol, *Charles Holden, Architect*, p.385

art historiography have been widely preoccupied with social, political and contextual concerns”, Bolt Rasmussen and Wamberg have suggestively pointed out the ways in which

the official art of capitalist societies from 1920 to 1950 displayed similarities to totalitarian art, leading to the question of whether similarities in artistic language necessarily indicate similarities in state organisation.<sup>233</sup>

Such questions hang over Moore’s adoption of a realist form, too, especially in the context of the war, his apparent politics, and his subsequent work for the Ministry of Information. But they also helps to account for the loaded nature of style and form in the 1940s. In the following chapter, I will discuss how Moore developed these lessons toward drawings produced in the service of the state, and in relation to the human experience of war.

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<sup>233</sup> Mikke Bolt Rasmussen and Jacob Wamberg, *Totalitarian Art and Modernity* (Aarhus University Press, Aarhus, 2010), pp.8-9

### 3. 'More like Abstractions from Etruscan Sculpture than Anxious Cockney Flesh and Blood'?: Representations of Women and Children in the Blitz

It has been suggested that Holden's Senate House inspired George Orwell's conception of the Ministry of Truth in 1984. Somewhere between the severity of its stark neo-classical façade, overshadowing Russell Square and its broader London environs, and the adoption of the recently completed building as the home of the Ministry of Information at the onset of war, Orwell found the inspiration to define an architectural equivalent for the now all-too-familiar world of surveillance and censorship that his novel described seventy years ago.

The Ministry of Truth – Minitrue, in Newspeak – was startling different from any other object in sight. It was an enormous pyramidal structure of glittering white concrete, soaring up, terrace after terrace, three hundred meters into the air.<sup>234</sup>

W.J. West, writing on Orwell's experience of censorship by the Ministry of Information whilst working as a broadcaster for the BBC, identified that the 'Newspeak' abbreviation 'Minitrue' was likely a play on 'Miniform', the telegraphic address of the Ministry of Information during wartime. Orwell's designation of his Ministry as concerned with "news, entertainment, education and the fine arts" appears to have fused both the building's intended and its adopted purposes, equating the process of empirical learning with its obverse manifestation in the act of interpretation, both of which are presented as readily serviceable engines of control.<sup>235</sup>

That the exterior form of Senate House captured, for Orwell, something of its interior operations during wartime – the Ministry of Information was the department responsible fundamentally for Britain's wartime propaganda – is incidental; co-incidental. Those stylistic

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<sup>234</sup> George Orwell, *1984* (Secker & Warburg, London, 1950), pp.7-8; quoted in part in Karol, *Charles Holden, Architect*, p. 428

<sup>235</sup> W. J. West, *Orwell: The War Broadcasts* (Gerald Duckworth & Co Ltd/British Broadcasting Corporation, London, 1985), pp.64-65; George Orwell, *1984* (Secker & Warburg, London, 1950), pp.7-8

traits that became benchmarks of totalitarian architecture and sculpture were the result of a broader European legacy twisted, or appropriated, by regimes determined on presenting themselves as the successors of Europe's grand traditions. (It is impossible to ignore that, as a result of Senate House's juxtaposition with the British Museum, and in their collated, implicit connotations, these buildings speak of and to the very concerns that totalitarian governments hankered after: the enunciation and veneration of the history of Empire; the outward projection of power and pomp inherited from the 'peaks' of European civilisation).

But the quirk of history that was Senate House's utilisation during wartime stands in conveniently as an introduction to the shifting concerns that Moore faced with the onset of war as an artist forced into working to commission, as the State came to stand in for and replace the dissolution of an available art market. The displacement of Senate House's intended function as a centre of learning to the centre of State-focused un-learning, to put it in suitably Orwellian terms, hyperbolically shifts the register on which his related works might be approached. From the emancipatory, elucidatory potential of university to the stifling, heavily regimented presentation of truth brought on by war.<sup>236</sup> Let us recognise from the very start that Moore's *Shelter Drawings* became renowned in relation to their widespread exhibition and dissemination as a form of propaganda for the War Artist's Advisory Committee (WAAC), a branch of the Ministry of Information under the chairmanship of Kenneth Clark, Director of the National Gallery.<sup>237</sup> But it was not for the WAAC, or even necessarily the public domain, that they were originally conceptualised.

In tracing the material, thematic and stylistic roots of Moore's drawings of war, and defining the ruptures in and the reorientation of his approach, we might locate something of his attitude towards the war, and his self-considered role in responding to it, publicly and privately. It is in the space between Moore's perceived purpose with these works – in the context of his broader output as an artist – and their subsequent appropriation as 'war art' that we might locate their significance; their proclamations of the politics of the British avant-garde – or at least parts of it – drawn into the orbit of the state. Central to this reading must be a rendition of the nature of drawing as an art form, and Moore's

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<sup>236</sup> The perceived need to monitor and censor any work produced under the guise of war art was communicated to Moore as follows: "It will be necessary to submit all your preliminary sketches and studies, as well as the finished work, for censorship. This will be done by us and it is, of course, desirable that we should have your drawings as soon as conveniently possible after they have been completed. I must caution you not to show any of these works, even to your friends, before they have been submitted by us to the censor." Letters from Dickey to Moore, 4 January 1941, WAAC Papers, Imperial War Museum archive, IWM GP/55/104, fo. 2

<sup>237</sup> Clark was also the Director of Film Control at the Ministry of Information.

development of it in response to war, moving beyond the domain of note-taking and sketching.

The technique Moore developed to embellish his sketches was the practice of wax resist, which he recalled discovering one afternoon whilst playing with his niece in the years before war broke out.

I used some of the cheap wax crayons... in combination with a wash of water-colour, and found, of course, that the water-colour did not 'take' on the wax, but only on the background. I found also that if you use a light-coloured or even a white wax crayon, then a dark depth of background can easily be produced by painting with dark-watercolour over the whole sheet of paper. Afterwards you can draw with India ink to give more definition to the forms. If the waxed surface is too greasy for the India ink to register it can be scraped down with a knife."<sup>238</sup>

'Depth of background'; 'definition to the forms'; 'scraped down with a knife'. The sculptural vocabulary employed by Moore to describe his new found method suggests a navigability between the terrains of two and three dimensions, affording Moore the opportunity to move beyond potential limitations in the drawn form.

Writing of a later drawing in ink, oil, chalk and wash, Anne Wagner described Moore's tactile application of two dimensional media as supplying "a literal heaviness – the sheet becomes a quasi sculpture, if one made from paint".<sup>239</sup> It was in Moore's re-formulation of his approach to drawing that he found the tools to tackle worthy subjects, transforming his artistic erudition into a purposeful response to his experiences. Though he reaches for 'quasi-sculptural' means, the properties of pen and ink, wax and watercolour allowed for the rapid execution of ideas. This adoption of a quick and immediate style infused with something of the weight of sculpture might be compared to the practice of modelling, or located somewhere between the brevity of preparatory sketches and the ponderous practice of carving. This sense of expediency also locates the results somewhere between the timeliness of reportage and the timelessness of history painting. The results, being two-dimensional, allowed them a reproducibility central to their subsequent utilisation.

Moore's attention had been turned to the potential of reproduction before the war when he began to experiment with lead and casting. This move away from the practice of carving anticipated Moore's adoption of bronze as his favoured media in the subsequent years, and

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<sup>238</sup> Quoted in Wilkinson, *The Drawings of Henry Moore*, p.34

<sup>239</sup> Anne Wagner, "Drawing, Sculpture and Idea", *Henry Moore: Ideas for Sculpture*, exhibition (Hauser and Wirth, London, 2010), p.94

a re-designation of his belief in the ethos of ‘truth to materials’, for the truth of his new materials was their extreme malleability.<sup>240</sup> This shift in practice might have been complemented by, or have been part of the same thought process that led to the first exhibition solely of his drawings, held in 1939 at the Mayor Gallery.<sup>241</sup> What had always been an important constituent part of Moore’s practice as an artist had, in the late 1930s, become entrenched as a means to the further dissemination of his work.

Moore’s turn to drawing as his *primary* artistic outlet in 1940 might thus be conceived as not only the result of a decline in the availability of sculptural materials, but also his recognition of the importance of print culture and of reproducibility as a means to the distribution of his work and his ideas, though that wouldn’t come until later. At the start of the war, drawing seems to have been for Moore merely the most readily available means by which to record his response to war, and only eventually the means by which he would survive financially with the retrospective support of the WAAC.<sup>242</sup>

By identifying these points from the start as an important aspect of my approach to the resultant works, I hope to gesture towards the nature of these works’ public presence: their eventual role in the domain of print culture in relation to, but distinct from, their material existence as independent art works.

A reinterpretation of the political and aesthetic radicality of Moore’s working process underwrote the exhibition of Moore’s work at Tate Britain in 2010.<sup>243</sup> Of particular value to this part of my argument is Mellor’s paper which explored the relationship between Moore’s wartime works and other depictions of both the blitz, as well as works made in support of the Republican cause during the Spanish Civil War in the years preceding, by artists, photographers and filmmakers.<sup>244</sup> This argument falls in line with a trend in more recent Moore scholarship to re-assert his radicalism, usually by way of a proclamation of his surrealist allegiances, though Mellor avoids that trap instead pushing for a more nuanced

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<sup>240</sup> Parigoris had usefully compared the reproducibility of bronze and its inherent problematics with the practice of carving, established in sculptural theory as a means to defining legitimacy, in Alexandra Parigoris, “Truth to Material: Bronze, on the Reproducibility of Truth” in Anthony Hughes and Erich Ranfft (ed.), *Sculpture and its Reproductions* (Reaktion Books, London, 1997), pp.131-151

<sup>241</sup> Moore’s earliest exhibitions had contained an equal proportion of sculptures and drawings, but it was only in the late ‘30s that the exhibition of his two-dimensional work on its own terms appears to have been of any interest to galleries. A letter from Moore to Clark in late 1938 suggests that not only Mayor had expressed such an interest, as he thanks Clark for suggesting an exhibition of his drawings to the Rosenberg Gallery, who had subsequently enquired about staging another show of his drawings in late 1939. Letter from HM to KC, November 29th 1938, Kenneth Clark Papers, Tate Gallery Archive 8812/1/3/2028

<sup>242</sup> The WAAC eventually bought eight of Moore’s drawings in April 1941, followed by two more in May. War Artists’ Advisory Committee, 23 April, 7 May 1941, Imperial War Museum archives, IWM/GP/72/E1, fos. 67, 83.

<sup>243</sup> Stephens, *Henry Moore*. See pp.30-31 in the introduction of this thesis.

<sup>244</sup> Mellor, ““And Oh! The Stench””, pp.52-63

rendition of Moore's work that opens up further avenues for research, avenues which I have attempted to follow. But let me start by returning to the surrealist question.

Lyndsey Stonebridge also wrote in the 2010 Tate catalogue, though of more immediate pertinence for this discussion is an earlier essay she wrote for the *Critical Essays* publication. There, she repeated the myth of Moore's war time artistic shift as follows:

Although he had begun to experiment with a more naturalistic approach two years earlier, most commentators agree that it was in the Shelter Drawings that Moore really began to put naturalist empathy back into what throughout the 1930s was a fairly sustained attention to forms of abstraction. The Shelter Drawings then mark the end of a relatively obscure modernist reputation and the beginning of Moore's second career (as John Russell put it) as one of the 'keepers of the public conscience'.<sup>245</sup>

Her essay is fundamentally concerned with relocating Moore's investigative artistic practice into a body of work that has been too readily accepted as 'publicly conscious', or at least *only* that. Drawing on Angus Calder's important work in debunking the 'Myth of the Blitz', in which he argued against the idea of the British "endurance" during the carpet bombing of its cities, Stonebridge attempts, and for the most part succeeds, to draw out the surrealist in Moore, exploring the way his works evince a sense of the war's true horror both internal- and externalised.<sup>246</sup>

"There is a sensibility that cuts across Moore's work", she writes, "that is less enamoured of redemptive myth-making than his popular image might convey."<sup>247</sup> The part that the drawings to be discussed here played in constructing that popular image cannot be under-appreciated, and nor can or should the role of those bodies responsible for their (mis-) presentation.

As I have already begun to demonstrate, tracing Moore's *Shelter Drawings* from his extended engagement with figuration in the '30s towards the Senate House commission suggests that his 'modernist reputation' was informed by a broader set of formal interests than is typically allowed for in Moore scholarship. To an extent, Stonebridge too is guilty of this bias in attempting to relocate surrealist allegiances in his wartime work. For though she recognises the distinction between Moore's avowed involvement with surrealism before

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<sup>245</sup> Stonebridge, "Bombs, Birth and Trauma", p.109; quoting Russell, *Henry Moore*, p.117

<sup>246</sup> Calder's invoked Roland Barthes' work on *Mythologies* to define this use of the term 'myth' with relation to the Blitz. "Semiology has taught us that myth has the task of giving an historical intention a natural justification, and making contingency appear eternal." Angus Calder, *The Myth of the Blitz* (Pimlico, London, 2001), pp.1-3

<sup>247</sup> Stonebridge, "Bombs, Birth and Trauma", p.108

the war and the apparent shift in his approach as a result of the Shelter Drawings during wartime, elevating Moore into the public domain, the direction of her argument appears intent on tracings 'isms' and ideologies espoused elsewhere into a series of works which had moved beyond what was always a tenuous relationship with surrealism as a dogma, and a frequently incoherent one at that. In doing so, Stonebridge misses something of the weight of making possible the navigation of such terrain in the context of such shifting circumstances. The continuity in Moore's interest in both figuration and abstracted forms of representation that collectively drove his artistic approach appears more evident than has been accounted for in the numerous attempts to define stops and starts in his career prescribed by circumstance.

Here, I am interested in what effect the war had on re-aligning – rather than re-directing – Moore's approach to the themes which pre-occupied him throughout his career, and in particular here, his approach to the mother and child theme.

On October 1<sup>st</sup> 1939, just one month into the conflict, Moore wrote to Kenneth Clark from his home in Kent asking what his feelings about the war were. Of his own concerns, Moore wrote:

to go on working as usual seems the sensible thing at present to do, apart from being what I want to do... For I hate intensely all that Fascism + Nazism stand for, + if it should win it might be the end in Europe of all the painting, sculpture, music, architecture, literature which we believe in... If it's a war against Fascism, a war to keep democratic freedom + culture, it should not destroy or neglect some of the very things its fighting for.<sup>248</sup>

Clark's response four days later read

so many artists have written to me asking what they should do in the war, and I have always answered go on painting as long as you possibly can... I am hoping that the government will be persuaded into taking up some longer scheme for employing artists. I am working hard for this.<sup>249</sup>

Moore's drawings from early wartime, produced before Clark formally established the WAAC, present exactly the sense of democratic freedom that characterised Moore's pre-war efforts: a wide and divergent interest in and application of form and style

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<sup>248</sup> Letter from Henry Moore to Kenneth Clark, October 1<sup>st</sup> 1939, Kenneth Clark Papers, Tate Gallery Archive 8812/1/3/2038

<sup>249</sup> Letter from Henry Moore to Kenneth Clark, October 5<sup>th</sup> 1939, HMF Archive



representative of an extended engagement with, and knowledge of, world (art) history. But traced through from root to branch, Moore's stylistic and formal oscillations in those early years of war present a suitably confused rendition of his political response to war, problematized, perhaps, by the gap between his ideologically driven protestations of autonomy and his attested political commitment.

Charles Harrison identified this contradiction in the work of not only Moore, but more broadly that of all his contemporaries working in Hampstead before the war. Of the presentation of 'abstract' painting and sculpture in the journal *Axis* between 1935 and 1937, edited by Myfanwy Evans and including largely British and French modernists among its number, Harrison wrote:

It was not, of course, to be expected that the critical discourse would be ideologically coherent, given the essential liberalism of its base and the latitude involved in prevailing interpretations of the meaning of 'abstract'.<sup>250</sup>

Indeed, Harrison presents that 'latitude' as representative of the historical moment in which the Hampstead avant-garde was formulated in the mid-'30s, representative of London's place as "the principal stage" for artistic experimentation as "intellectual émigrés moved westward" and a small audience for those experiments was engendered. But he also suggests that the lack of understanding of the context in which those experiments had begun – mainland Europe a decade or more earlier – led to a formal approach devoid of its inherent purpose, and contained largely within a "consideration of the merits of alternative artistic styles", concluding "it was a price paid for the assertion of art's autonomy."<sup>251</sup>

In his review of the presentation of abstraction in the journal *Circle* that came in the wake of *Axis*, however, Harrison was more castigatory. *Circle* presented itself as an 'international survey of constructive art', and though the tag purposefully held back from aligning itself wholly with constructivism, the implication was clear. But Harrison points to the important distinction between the version of constructive(ist) art pronounced therein and rubric of constructivism originally defined by the avowedly political Soviet constructivists around Vladimir Tatlin.

The Soviet constructivists presented an artistic ideology intentionally and faithfully consistent with the 'party line'. For them, "art was to be seen as determined by material and economic forces and as constructive in so far as it entailed participation in social

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<sup>250</sup> Harrison, *English Art and Modernism*, p.277

<sup>251</sup> Ibid, p.280

(re)construction in furtherance of communism.”<sup>252</sup> In contrast, the West European chapter espoused a leftist ideology underwritten by attestations of artistic autonomy that for Harrison were clearly both “anti-Marxist and anti-materialist” in their implied proposition that “man’s a-historical ‘creative genius’ has priority in determining culture.”<sup>253</sup> And therein lay the contradiction, as defined succinctly by Harrison:

*Circle* was an ambitious, programmatic publication and at face value appeared to assert the success of a theoretically coherent international movement to which the English contingent had made a significant contribution... Yet for all the consistency and rigour, *Circle*’s ideological base was essentially unsound...

In a sense what *Circle* appeared to propose was that the spiritual and intellectual excitement of revolution is accessible to experience, through art, architecture and design, without the historical actuality; that ideas move mountains... But there always was and always will be a deep contradiction involved in attempts to assert or secure some critical agency for the intuitions of the artist (and for design as an executive arm), while the principle of the autonomy of the artist is the creature of idealism.<sup>254</sup>

Those attestations of autonomy presented in the pages of *Circle* vary wildly, however, and the contents were every bit as incoherent as they had been in *Axis*. What demands attention is the extent to which the idealism and liberalism inherent in the pronouncements of Naum Gabo, Herbert Read and Ben Nicholson differ from the pragmatic and socially-conscious suggestions put forward most noticeably in the essays by Gropius, Fry and Lewis Mumford.<sup>255</sup>

That Moore hardly discussed his politics might explain something of their absence in subsequent histories of his work. Indeed, Harrison identifies that Moore stood out from others identified with *Circle* in his simultaneous involvement with the surrealists whose stance was quite the opposite of the ‘constructivists’, if unified by a fundamental allegiance.<sup>256</sup> That this might be a further mark of Moore’s shifting stance, or of his canniness in collegial relations, similarly belies the way both allegiances relate to a broad

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<sup>252</sup> Ibid, p.285

<sup>253</sup> Ibid, p.285

<sup>254</sup> Ibid, pp.286-287

<sup>255</sup> Mumford, “The Death of the Monument”, pp.263-270. On Gropius and Fry, see chapter five of this thesis.

<sup>256</sup> Harrison writes that in Moore’s work of that period, “that reconciliation of ‘abstract’ with ‘Surreal’ interests... appeared to remain feasible as it did in no-one else’s.” Harrison, *English Art and Modernism*, p.302

belief in art's capacity to present oppositionary and revolutionary politics in a manner independent of rhetoric, but also, significantly, independent of political doctrine.<sup>257</sup>

The clearest signifiers of Moore's political leanings, then, might be located in the artistic decisions he made both independently and in terms of the commissions he accepted, at least in the period in question.<sup>258</sup> In an interview with *The Studio*, Kenneth Clark wrote of how the WAAC collection could not be "completely representative of modern English art" without the inclusion of "those pure painters who are interested solely in putting down their feelings about shapes and colours."<sup>259</sup> When asked about the subject later, Moore quite candidly responded: "They didn't want to do it – why should they? They didn't want to connect their work with the war; their objective was to be *pure* artists, to be above emotion – once you begin to connect, then you're not pure."<sup>260</sup>

The extents to which the onset of war shifted the broad shape of Moore's career, and the nature of the opportunities available to him, offering him new forms in which to present himself and his perceived purpose, are inextricably linked to his perception of the war. But that simple distinction outlined above, espousing the difference between his acceptance of a number of public commissions and the reasons why abstractionists would not have, helps to identify his conception of the social role of art, and his purpose therein.

Six months later, on the evening of the 24<sup>th</sup> of April 1940, Henry Moore wrote another introspective letter, this time to his friend Arthur Sale, though by then he was struggling to pin down his feelings about the war and the artist's role within it quite so succinctly.

I'm still in the process of trying to get my attitude to the war clear and satisfactorily even to myself – None of the recognised pro or anti attitudes to it as I know them are (clear or logical or completely practical) either completely clear, or logical, or

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<sup>257</sup> Ibid, p.287

<sup>258</sup> The extent of Moore's political involvement continues to be a source of constant debate and conjecture in Moore scholarship and amongst scholars in more private settings, with his professional and personal acquaintances most often looked to for evidence. James Hyman noted Moore's involvement with the Artists' International Association, and backed it up with a note that the former Labour leader Michael Foot told him that Moore had made contributions to and sold works in support of the Labour newspaper *Tribune*, whilst David Mellor backed up his rendition of the communitarian iconography in Moore's *Shelter Drawings* by pointing to his close associations with Communist Party members Roger Roughton and Bert Lloyd as evidence of his inklings. Both stories help to formulate an image of Moore without suggesting as much as his works are able to about his considered response to the contemporary moment. Hyman, *Battle for Realism*, pp. 90, 230n14; Mellor, "And Oh, The Stench!", p.57

<sup>259</sup> Kenneth Clark, "War Artist's at the National Gallery", *The Studio*, CXXIII, January 1942, p.586

<sup>260</sup> Meirion and Susie Harries, *The War Artists: British Official War Art of the Twentieth Century* (Michael Joseph Ltd in association with the Imperial War Museum and the Tate Gallery, London, 1983), p.161, from an interview with the authors.

consistent, or not really practical, so that perhaps I can't hope to set my personal attitude to it that's logical and clear.<sup>261</sup>

(See fig.27 for a full appreciation of Moore's equivocations).

That this reads like some sort of exercise in modernist fragmentation serves its own purpose: the hesitance and uncertainty of his delivery complement the letter's content, which in turn reflects the incommensurability and confusion of war to which he found himself inescapably drawn.

Moore had met Sale, a lecturer in English literature at Cambridge, at the inaugural exhibition of Surrealism in England in 1936, and their written correspondence in the 1940s presents some of Moore's sincerest enunciations of his thoughts and feelings in that period. The result is, here, one of the clearest and most honest of Moore's avowals of his self-considered role.

But even in this conflicting state of mind about the war I think I shall be able to keep working, because – along with human relationships – it's what matters most to me – and about its importance I have clear convictions. That is, I believe that the artist makes through his work, a basic attack on what is wrong with the running of the world and only through his imagination and shaping is new meaning new currency given to the sensual world around us, and that it's the artist who is the real revolutionary, and in his work, not in the popular political leader sense.<sup>262</sup>

Given Moore's enunciation of his potential as revolutionary – his politics rendered on the surface of his work – might we read the breadth of his stylistic approach as a testament to his confusion, which in turn shapes the direction of his 'attack'? Might we trace the recognition here of his estimation of 'human relationships' as an anchor onto which to might hang his continued reverence of the human form?<sup>263</sup>

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<sup>261</sup> Letter from HM to AS, April 24 1940, HMF Archive In correspondence with Sale's son, I was interested to find that Sale, having lost contact with Moore at about the same time that Moore's station as an artist rose, felt that their friendship had not been quite mutual. I suggested that, rather, Moore's correspondence with Sale suggests a familiarity and a bonhomie unapparent anywhere else in his correspondence. My feeling is that Moore found in Sale an equal, rather than a professional relationship, and as his professional career took over so did its associations; his deference to the likes of Clark appears a telling expression of his considered need to maintain good relations with influential people.

<sup>262</sup> Letter from Henry Moore to Arthur Sale, April 24 1940, HMF Archive.

<sup>263</sup> Though I don't have the space to do so here, a broader discussion about the way post-war freedom came to be exclaimed, in America, through a disavowal of the human figure and of representation altogether, and in Europe through the fragmentation of the human form, especially with relation to how those directions of intent rejected the longer line of art historical intent, might expose something of the reasons why Moore's work of the period has been devalued, and his achievements overlooked. It may also help explain why the incoherence of Moore's approach has been overlooked in favour of attempts to identify his adherence.

Moore's work from the first year of war was concerned with all of the same artistic concerns as practiced before the war's onset, but shot through with suggestions of the war's psychological effect. In the absence of actual warfare in that period known as the 'phoney war', it was fear more than experience that characterised the national feeling, and Moore's development of the wax resist technique in the early years of war and before his *Shelter Drawings* appears to have provided him with the means to express that sensitivity.<sup>264</sup>

Some of Moore's most distressing, claustrophobic drawings of the period resulted from their materiality as much as that depicted. *Seated Figure and Pointed Forms* from 1939 (fig.28), and Tate's *Standing Figures* from 1940 (fig.29) each possess the 'depth of background' he described in his discovery of the method. As a result, the figures in each of these drawings appear to float in an undefined space between the background and the foreground. Their relation to one another remains uncertain and, in the case of the former work, a panoply of gnashing jaws loom threateningly over a series of ill-defined figures.

Robert Melville described these forms in even more outlandish terms, "a settlement of statuary is being invaded from the air by an alien species... the invaders filling the sky are huge pebble-like objects with gaping holes."<sup>265</sup> The metaphoric suggestions appear obvious: renditions of the fear of aerial warfare. But as Andrew Causey has suggested, Melville's account does not follow through to render this "tormented visualisation prophetic of the aerial bombardment Britain was soon to undergo."<sup>266</sup> Such works are defined in their relation to Moore's 'surreal' works once more whilst his drawings of war are marked by their return to figuration, a separating out of Moore's avant-garde experiments from his attestations of reality.

Causey suggests shrewdly that although these "drawings are not political in any documentary sense", works such as these, produced in the years leading up to war, should not be "detached from deteriorating conditions of the time."<sup>267</sup> But taking Causey's point forward, might we note the presence of a number of mothers and children among that 'settlement of statuary' being attacked in *Seated Figure and Pointed Forms*. Their

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<sup>264</sup> "When war was declared I just went on working. The period of the 'phoney' was very unsettling for many artists and I remember a young sculptor friend telling me that suddenly he didn't know what he wanted to do, but for me it was a time for getting on with one's work...", Henry Moore, "Introduction: In the Words of Henry Moore", *Henry Moore: A Shelter Sketchbook* (British Museum Publications, London, 1988), p.7

<sup>265</sup> Robert Melville, *Henry Moore; Sculpture and Drawings 1921-1969* (Thames and Hudson, London, 1970), p.16

<sup>266</sup> Causey, *The Drawings of Henry Moore*, p.90

<sup>267</sup> *Ibid*, p. 91

cohabitation of a shared formal space threatens their being, and the threat of invaders from above appears eminently concerned with the immediate threat of war.

Rebecca Searle has written recently about the impact of bomber planes on the life of British civilians both before the war, when fear of what might come was at its highest, and during the war when all the awful fears came true.<sup>268</sup> She has also written on the presentation of those fears – or lack of – in works by war artists for the WAAC. Images of the impact of aerial bombardment are rare, she has written, while proposed works detailing the fear and damage done by bombing campaigns were rejected by the scheme or asked to be modified. Frequently, as Brian Foss has noted, architectural damage stood in lieu of the real effects of the bombing.<sup>269</sup> Moore, however, appears to conflate these points.

Another frantically scrawled drawing entitled *Devastated Buildings and Underground Platform Scene* (fig.30) seemingly produced soon after – if not in the midst of – the Blitz and published on the first page of what was presented as his *Shelter Sketch-Book* illustrates not only the crumbling buildings destroyed by bombs but also the falling bomb itself *and* the dislodged families cowering underground.<sup>270</sup> This layering of cause and of effect – of linear time condensed graphically – is accorded a compositional equivalent, too. The better part of the page is taken up with chaotic scratchy lines describing the damage in abstract terms, whilst singled out from the page, in a pencil line frame, a bomb – delineated from its surrounds by a waxy mist – falls calmly across the page towards a form reminiscent of the split heads that permeated Moore's work at that time, underscored by suggestions of barbed wire.

Though the comparison has been repeated often, David Mellor has identified the influence of Picasso on Moore in these early shelter drawings with purpose and direction, comparing elements of the Spaniard's renowned work produced in response to the disaster of Guernica with motifs employed by Moore.<sup>271</sup> Specifically, Mellor compares the form of the screaming mother's mouth from Picasso's masterpiece with the abstract cloven head on that first page of Moore's *Shelter Sketch-Book* that appears to be about to ingest the falling bomb.<sup>272</sup> Mellor has also identified the potential significance of the barbed wire in

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<sup>268</sup> Rebecca Searle, "The War Artists' Advisory Committee, Aviation and the Nation during the Second World War", *Forum: University of Edinburgh Postgraduate Journal of Culture & The Arts*, Issue 8, Spring 2009. See also Richard Overy, *The Morbid Age: Britain Between the Wars* (Allen Lane, London, 2009), pp.334-336

<sup>269</sup> Brian Foss, *War Paint: Art, War, State and Identity in Britain, 1939-1945* (Yale University Press, London, 2007), pp.42-43

<sup>270</sup> Henry Moore, *Shelter Sketch-Book* (Nicholson & Watson, London, 1945)

<sup>271</sup> Mellor, "And Oh! The Stench!", p.53

<sup>272</sup> Later in life, Moore would tell John Russell that the only two sources of inspiration he had ever needed were Picasso the British Museum. John Russell, *Henry Moore*, p.102

*Devastated Buildings and Underground Platform Scene* with relation to images disseminated by the National Joint Committee for Spanish Relief in Spain in support of the Republican cause after their defeat in the Spanish Civil War, where barbed wire was employed analogically to speak of the Fascist imprisonment of Republicans and their supporters. Moore had previously employed the iconography quite explicitly in a lithograph he produced for the Republican cause in 1939 entitled *Spanish Prisoner* (fig.31).<sup>273</sup>

Such a conflation of the experiences of both the Spanish and British peoples from fascist enemies is an important one to recognise, as it detracts from the idea of his *Shelter Drawings* as either nationalistically resonant or somehow representative of courage and morale, and instead registers them in a European tradition threatened by fascist ideology. That Guernica was an artistic response to what has been described as the “first ‘modern’ air raid”, and was intended for the public space of the Paris World exhibition as has been commented upon by Lawrence Alloway suggests further the significance of such an interrelation of the works.<sup>274</sup>

We must also notice amongst Moore’s depiction of ruined buildings the contrasting styles in which he presents those families sheltering beneath the wreckage, and indeed their presence once again in direct relation to both the attacks and their after affects. Bottom left, a sketchily penned group lean against the walls of an underground platform, the pale ink wash differentiating their locale from the fiery-red wash above them ascribing to their experience the semblance of safety whilst the rendition bottom right is almost lost to darkness as though uncovered from beneath the rubble of the page. Sat statuesque and defined in three dimensions by way of chiaroscuro, this totemic figurine of a seated woman reminds one of Moore’s drawings for the Senate House commission whilst prefiguring Moore’s terracotta maquettes for the *Madonna and Child* (see fig.32). Underneath the ink wash which synthesises the page’s details, visible top right in particular, appear suggestions of Moore’s pre-war notes, as though literally overtaken and overwritten by the circumstances of war.

This simultaneous presentation of the real-life and real-time effects of the bombing comes as close as drawing might be able to defining the awful impact of war. But it is also almost

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<sup>273</sup> Mellor discusses the significance of the Spanish Civil War on the formulation of Moore’s response to fascism further in the essay, with particular attention to the photographic traditions that ran from one conflict into the other.

<sup>274</sup> Alloway discusses the way Picasso’s descriptions of the work failed to match the significance of this social history, a prescient point of distinction with regard to the way Moore’s writings about his public works have overshadows their social poignancy. Lawrence Alloway, “Problems of Iconography and Style” in Richard Kalina (ed.), *Imagining the present: Context, Content and the Role of the Critic*, (Routledge, London, 2006), p.252

unique in subject matter amongst Moore's wartime drawings in its explicitness. Though his earliest renditions of the bombing present an immediate response to the cut and thrust of war, more common are those depictions of the fallout of the bombing campaigns removed from the immediate details of war: the shelters, and the piling up of bodies therein contained within timeless space. Mothers, children, old and young alike are brought together in an abstract, unidentifiable but communitarian space that David Sylvester described ironically as the "realisation of the totalitarian dream, the complete identification of the individual with the community."<sup>275</sup> In his doing so, he exposed the difference between his ideological impression of Moore and what I understand as Moore's own purpose, as I will come to describe.

In his work on Moore's drawings, Alan Wilkinson identified the cohabitation of numerous practiced styles in the opening pages of Moore's published shelter sketchbook; the crossover from certain 'made up' forms similar to drawings from pre-war to the more representational scenes representative of "a more naturalistic approach to the subject."<sup>276</sup> He even pinpoints one image as a large "abstract idea for drapery from a purely sculptural point of view" that has nothing to do with the war, before noting that such 'sculptural' ideas "appear less frequently towards the end of the First Shelter Sketchbook", as though Moore was weaning himself off his natural inclination, perhaps having realised that his works were serviceable, via the WAAC, for the war effort?<sup>277</sup>

It is in the distinction between what appear to be Moore's earliest and his apparently later, more measured responses to the war in artistic terms, that we might begin to conceive of the difference between the specifics of his vociferous renditions of architectural, temporal and experiential details of the experience of war and the open ended metaphoric capacity of his mediated return to the mother and child theme in the service of the WAAC. That is, the functionality of each as wartime propaganda, or conversely, their potential to undermine or at least exceed the perimeters of that narrow role.

Some of the most recognisable images from the *Shelter Drawings*, perhaps unsurprisingly, are those works from the national collection that have been exhibited most regularly; *Women and Children in the Tube* (fig.33) and *Grey Tube Shelter* (fig.34) from 1940 and *Shelterers in the Tube* (fig.35) and *Woman Seated in the Underground* (fig.36) from 1941 (the first and last of which relate closely to both the Senate House drawings and Moore's

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<sup>275</sup> D.A.B. Sylvester, "Henry Moore: The Shelter Drawings", *Graphis*, No. 14 (Geneva, 1946), p.126

<sup>276</sup> Wilkinson, *The Drawings of Henry Moore*, p.31

<sup>277</sup> Ibid



work on the Madonna discussed in chapter four). Each of these works conforms to an apparently practised and considered model wherein the shelterers, predominantly mothers and children as far as we can tell, sit passively and stoically in their underground environs: motionless verging on inanimate. Whereas the maquette-like seated figure in *Devastated Buildings and Underground Platform Scene* was surrounded by the incidents of life, and riddled with suitably affective colours, these figures are all rendered in grisaille and heavy chiaroscuro, with the results purposefully sculptural in terms reminiscent of Mantegna's delineation of sculptural mass rendered in two dimensions such as can be seen in *The Introduction of the Cult of Cybele at Rome* 1505-6 (Fig.37).

The potential conflation of the female experience of war described in Moore's works with a historic representation of classical idol worship – of Moore's mothers with a totemic "Mother Goddess"<sup>278</sup> – lends itself to both the universalising rhetoric of Neumann and co. and the idea of the heroic nature of British endurance during wartime. But perhaps more significant was Moore's recourse to a work he would have known from the National Gallery given that the *Shelter Drawings* subsequently entered the national collection by way of the WAAC, to stand in for the national collection which had been moved into storage. This point is central to the after lives of the *Shelter Drawings*. These were the works considered suitable for such a role, chosen by Clark, the National Gallery's Director, as the best representations of that historical moment.

But to identify these works as propaganda, and to consider their role in presenting misinformation and the potential impact of subsequent views of the war mediated through these mediated images, to be seen in distinction from the realities of war, is essential to demystifying these works.

Calder's work on the subject of the 'myth of the blitz' has sought to differentiate the widely populated reports of heroic endurance on the part of the British public during the shelling of its cities from a more candid depiction of the horrors enacted and experienced therein on a much broader scale. Throughout his important book on the subject, he is careful not to undermine or belie reports that describe what he terms the 'Cheerful Cockney's' resilience in the face of war. But central to his argument are hundreds of reports which attest, simultaneously, to truly horrific experiences, many mined from the Mass-Observation

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<sup>278</sup> See Jane Martineau (ed.), *Andrea Mantegna*, exhibition (Royal Academy of Arts, London, 1992), cat.135 (Keith Christiansen), pp.412-416

archives.<sup>279</sup>

The Luftwaffe's bombing of London began in late August 1940, although it was not until the 7<sup>th</sup> September that "a new scale" of bombing – that which has been subsequently termed and mythologised as 'the Blitz' – took hold.<sup>280</sup> By that point, Calder suggests, the public had been normalised to the bombing having been readied for worse earlier on. He points to a Home Intelligence report on the eve of the Blitz proper, reporting that

the public continue to take the bombing in good heart... An increasingly fatalistic attitude towards the effects of bombing is reported, and this appears to be coupled with a high state of morale... Co-operation and friendliness in public shelters are reported to be increasing.<sup>281</sup>

And even two days later, of the 9<sup>th</sup> September, the official line was that "little sign of panic and none of defeatism" were to be found in even the worst affected parts of East London.<sup>282</sup>

A series of sketch book ideas that seem to precede the Shelter Drawings proper given their difference in form and focus, responding documentarily to the details of life during wartime, appear to describe something closer to the expectations of what was to come. Take *Eighteen Ideas for War Drawings* from 1940, a cartoon-strip-like page of drawings reminiscent of his *Ideas for Sculpture* from the pre-war years which collate the experiences of the city – bombed buildings and roaming searchlights/shell fire – with the effects on the countryside. Moore casts cows burning in a field as an appropriately absurd and horrifying image of the unnatural, unfathomable experience (fig.38). These thumbnail idea sheets are just that, unfocused and indifferent responses to the progress of war, especially seen in relation to what came after.

It was in the early stages of the Blitz – the extended, catastrophic bombing campaign that was to last for all but one of a seventy-six night period – that Moore appeared to turn to the immediate impact of war and its effects on both the city and its people with works such

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<sup>279</sup> A number of the reports had previously been republished in the compendium of Mass Observation writings: Tom Harrison, *Living Through the Blitz* (Penguin, Harmondsworth, 1978). Indeed, Alan Sinfield has noted that so strong was the myth that, when Harrison's collection was published in the 70s, even some of the original Mass Observation researchers were surprised by their own findings and how little they tallied with their ostensible recollections. Sinfield, *Literature, Politics and Culture*, p, 36

<sup>280</sup> Calder, *The Myth of the Blitz*, p.33

<sup>281</sup> Daily and Weekly Home Intelligence Reports from the Ministry of Information, collected in the Mary Adams Papers in the Mass-Observation Archive at the University of Sussex; quoted in Calder, *The Myth of the Blitz*, p.126

<sup>282</sup> Ibid, p.126

as *Devastated Buildings and Underground Platform Scene*, as the full impact of the war was brought to Moore's doorstep.

To follow the history as it has been written; on the 11th September, Moore and some friends had been into town to visit a restaurant, and returning home to Belsize Park by tube late into the evening, Moore and his wife were confronted with the spectacle of a torrential barrage of gunfire put up by the British Forces to counter the German attack, and a subterranean population sheltering from its affects.<sup>283</sup> Forced to stay there for an hour till the gunfire subsided, Moore later described the effect of the shelterers being "cut off from what was happening up above, but... aware of it", a description that closely matches the form of those pages discussed previously.<sup>284</sup>

Though the origins of Moore's *Shelter Drawings* in relation to that fortuitous moment have never been far from commentaries on their history, it has also been noted that the full significance of their relation to the history of Britain at war in 1940 has often been "underemphasized or ignored" in favour of their various art historical relations to "Egyptian tombs, Etruscan funereal sculpture, the Nazi death camps and Jungian archetypes."<sup>285</sup> The latter of these, particularly, remains a common feature in renditions of the whole of Moore's career, with Erich Neumann's Jungian reading of Moore's 'earth mothers' continually reassessed and re-employed.<sup>286</sup> The success of Moore's works is underscored by their ambiguity and their availability to such readings; their negotiation of the space between all these points resulting in what is constantly identified as a timeless art, though it would perhaps be better to cast them as unfixed.

What appeared to appeal most to Moore about his experiences in the Underground were the ways in which his favoured themes availed themselves to him therein. Of his tours of the London Underground shelters in which London's poor huddled away from the Blitz, Moore wrote: "I saw hundreds of Henry Moore Reclining Figures stretched along the platform" and "even the train tunnels seemed to be like the holes in my sculpture."<sup>287</sup>

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<sup>283</sup> Andrews, *London's War*, pp.35-49

<sup>284</sup> Henry Moore, "Introduction: In the Words of Henry Moore", pp.9-10

<sup>285</sup> Peter Stansky and William Abrahams, *London's Burning: Life, Death and Art in the Second World War* (Constable, London, 1994), p.43

<sup>286</sup> Neumann, *The Archetypal World of Henry Moore*; see also Lyndsey Stonebridge, "A Love of Beginnings: Henry Moore and Psychoanalysis", *Henry Moore*, exhibition (Tate Britain, London, 2010), pp.40-49

<sup>287</sup> Carlton Lake, "Henry Moore's World", *Atlantic Monthly*, vol.209, no.1, January 1962, quoted in James (ed.), *Henry Moore on Sculpture*, pp.212-216; Henry Moore, *Shelter-Sketchbook* (Marlborough Fine Art, London, 1967), quoted in Wilkinson, *The Drawings of Henry Moore*, p.29. That Moore continued to visit Shelters with a view to developing ideas for drawings suggests the suitability of the theme to his artistic intent, especially given that he ignored more than one more pragmatic commission offered to him by the WAAC after his initial success with the Shelter Drawings. See Stansky and Abrahams, *London's Burning*, pp.34-43

John Russell took such statements at face value, defining the results as “history put[ting] in Moore’s way precisely those images of envelopment and protectiveness which had been thrust on him in earlier years by the shape of the block, or by tendencies implicit in art history, or by his own unconscious memories.”<sup>288</sup> This equating of material potential with the thrust of history is a problematic one, and has been countered by Stonebridge thus:

The implication is that art history and Moore’s psyche had had nothing to do with history before it started to resemble them so strangely, before it so fortuitously fell into their path, as it were, conveniently on hand to consecrate the notions of art and individualist history at the very moment both were called to account...<sup>289</sup>

Stonebridge’s problematisation of Russell is about countering this notion of artistic pre-determinacy – suffuse with overtones of artistic genius – by locating Moore’s work as an essentialised version of collective trauma, defined by that shared experience.<sup>290</sup> She is interested, rather, in the way these works speak of the slippage between the personal and the public, the immediate and the immemorial.

But another problem with Russell’s point here is located in a reading of the works that asks how – or even why – art operates: *always* called to account as a testament to the circumstances of its creation, and defined by history as a process, a continuum, not an episodic and individually ascribed psycho-historic panacea. Moore’s response to war is predicated on an experiential scale of duration, not one defined by rupture. His thematic concerns were well established by 1939 and changed little in the course of his career. As such, Moore’s development and redeployment of themes towards new ends should be read as part of that broader trajectory, a cumulative process where the traces of stylistic appropriation continue to repeat past ideas. What might matter most are the simple facts of his having sought out these images. So why, beyond the facts of his personal experience of war, did Moore turn to so specific a subject as the shelters in wartime?

Moore’s response to war and his fundamental interest in both the human form and in ‘human relationships’ suggests the apparent importance he placed in portraying humanity, here, in its most decrepit state. Read received Moore’s presentations of people in the underground as the “most authentic expression of the special tragedy of this war – its

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<sup>288</sup> John Russell, *Henry Moore*, p. 112; quoted in Stonebridge, “Bombs, Birth, and Trauma”, p.110

<sup>289</sup> Stonebridge, “Bombs, Birth, and Trauma”, p.110

<sup>290</sup> Both Stonebridge’s debunking of Russell’s biographic hyperbole and Harrison’s problematisation of the anti-materialist connotations of such ‘artistic genius’ rhetoric, discussed above, appear consistent with and appropriate to the thrust of Moore’s artistic purpose. That is, the significance of the works’ necessary relation to historical circumstances and, importantly, the ways in which Moore signposts his conceptions thereof in appropriate art historic terms.

direct impact on the ordinary mass of humanity, the women, children, and old men of our cities.”<sup>291</sup> Moore wrote of his own response to his experiences there in another letter to Arthur Sale. After describing his sense of walking around London like that of being on a film set, he wrote:

But what doesn't seem like a cinematograph reel to me, are the queues, before four o'clock outside some of the tube stations of poor looking women + children waiting to be let in to take shelter for the night - + the dirty old bits of blankets + cloths + pillows stretched out on the tube platforms – Its about the most pathetic, sordid + disheartening sight I hope to see.<sup>292</sup>

In his work on Moore's drawings, Causey accepted Read's presentation of Moore's work, above, but mitigated it with a feeling that “Moore's blunt expression of disgust at the shelterers' physical condition was less than approving.”<sup>293</sup> I would suggest, rather, that the overriding sense of his reading of the sights there is a sympathetic one, if one shocked by the effect of what he saw. From his own memory years later Moore wrote more compassionately:

I was fascinated by the sight of people camping out deep under the ground... there were intimate little touches. Children fast asleep, with trains roaring past only a couple of yards away. People who were obviously strangers to one another forming tight little intimate groupings... It put me in the right mood to start drawing what I saw in the Underground. I purposely went by tube to various parts of London to see what differences there were between the stations... I never made any sketches in the Underground. It just wasn't possible. It would have been like making sketches in the hold of a slave ship. One couldn't be as disinterested as that.<sup>294</sup>

Calder has described the comparable experience of those living in East London's slums – “where nearly two hundred thousand people lived at an average of twelve per dwelling” – and those sheltering beneath them in the underground and in other makeshift shelters fashioned from large cellars and beneath railways arches, all in ‘unspeakable’ and squalid conditions.<sup>295</sup> The respective failures of evacuation of both children and working adults from the poorer parts of London meant that these sights were easy to find, especially at the larger shelters such as Tilbury where “as many as fourteen or sixteen thousand were

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<sup>291</sup> Read (ed.), *Henry Moore: Sculptures and Drawings*; quoted in Causey, *The Drawings of Henry Moore*, p.120

<sup>292</sup> Letter from Henry Moore to Arthur Sale, October 10<sup>th</sup> 1940, HMF archive

<sup>293</sup> Causey, *The Drawings of Henry Moore*, p.120

<sup>294</sup> Henry Moore, “Introduction: In the Words of Henry Moore”, pp.9-10

<sup>295</sup> Angus Calder, *The People's War 1939-45* (Jonathan Cape, London, 1986), pp.163-202

estimated to use it on certain nights". As such, Moore was not alone in visiting, as "parties of sightseers from the West End would make the Tilbury Arches the highlight of their tour of black spots."<sup>296</sup>

Roy Lowe has discussed the extent of both the failures of evacuation and, consequently, of educational provision in cities during the war, writing

By the start of 1940 approximately half of the evacuees were back with their parents. But this was a trend which the Government could not condone without abandoning completely its policy of protecting children from foreseeable air-raids. The results were that many teachers remained in the rural areas to which they had been directed, while growing numbers of children roamed the city streets with no formal education being provided for them.<sup>297</sup>

But Paul Addison has noted that it was this failure of policy, and the resulting inescapability of the plight of London's poor that served to alter popular conceptions of them leading to a broad consensus on the need for reforms in both medical and educational provision. He quoted Neville Chamberlain, who himself had been Minister of Health in the '20s, as writing

I never knew that such conditions existed, and I feel ashamed of having been so ignorant of my neighbours. For the rest of my life I mean to try to make amends by helping such people to live cleaner and healthier lives.<sup>298</sup>

Moore produced hundreds of sketches in response to the shelterers. Indeed, the theme occupied Moore's work for most of the following year, as he returned time and again to large public shelters under the guise of being a war artist though he did little to maintain his position as such, accepting but failing to fulfil a number of other suggested commissions.<sup>299</sup>

Rather, Moore dedicated himself to investigating the form of the mother and child, and of communitarian living, in the confines of public shelters. But to call them *public* shelters is a misnomer, or at least would have been in relation to Moore's earliest experience of them.

With the outbreak of the blitz, it became quickly obvious that Britain's poorest areas, and thus most vulnerable being frequently industrial, were woefully ill-prepared for the full force of the Luftwaffe's rolling raids. Among the most vocal proponents of the need for further support – and the most active in attaining it – were the Communist Party. In a

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<sup>296</sup> Calder, *The People's War*, p.182.

<sup>297</sup> Roy Lowe (ed.), *Education and the Second World War: Studies in Schooling and Social Change* (The Falmer Press, London, 1992), p.5

<sup>298</sup> Paul Addison, *The Road to 1945* (Jonathan Cape, London, 1975), p.72

<sup>299</sup> Stansky and Abrahams, *London's Burning*, pp.37-38

record of the wartime achievements of the CP, Phil Piratin, a Communist Party member elected MP for Stepney from 1945 to 1950, wrote of their campaign for better provision long before the war before describing their role, both active and parliamentary, in pushing for the government approved use of the London Underground as de facto public shelters.

A demand had been made for the Tubes to be made available as shelters. The Home Secretary, Mr. Herbert Morrison, said that this was impossible. The only valid reason he gave was that children might fall on to the line and be killed. This was not a very impressive argument, when you consider the hundreds who were being killed because they had no shelter. The police were given instructions to allow no one to use the Tubes for shelter [but t]he Communist Party decided that the Tubes should be open for shelter... preparations were made to break open the gates of the Tubes which the police were closing immediately the air-raid siren was sounded. At a number of stations these actions were taken. Various implements such as crowbars happened to be available, and while the police stood on duty guarding the gates, they were quickly swept aside by the crowds, the crowbars brought into action, and the people went down. That night tens of thousands sprawled on the Tube platforms. The next day Mr. Herbert Morrison, solemn as an owl, rose to make his world-shattering announcement: the Government had reconsidered its opinion in the matter of the Tubes being used as shelters.<sup>300</sup>

Calder described the “occupation” of the London Underground as a “heroic assertion of popular rights against a legacy of inept bureaucracy and Tory rule”, and gestured towards the significance of such episodes in relation to the popular support afforded to the Labour Party in the first post-war election of 1945.<sup>301</sup>

Moore’s interpretations of this chapter of the war, both stoic and squalid, reflect a sense of this heroic resistance as well as the underlying horror revealed by the war; the appalling conditions of the east end slums torn asunder by the bombing. His choice of subject then appears considered, suffuse with the political connotations written about by Piratin.<sup>302</sup> That the subject was deemed suitable for the war cause is, in part, as a result of their ambiguity, but must also be recognised in tandem with their exhibition and publication after the

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<sup>300</sup> Phil Piratin, *Our Flag Stays Red* (Lawrence & Wishart, London, 1980), pp.64-75. My thanks to Professor Chris Pinney for pointing me in the direction of these significant historical details

<sup>301</sup> Calder, *The Myth of the Blitz*, p.47

<sup>302</sup> The often mooted suggestion that Moore may have been a member of the British Communist Party was repeated to a colleague of mine at Tate, Debra Lennard, in an interview with the daughter of Clive and Nora Branson, two of Moore’s early patrons and the owners of a socialist bookshop on the Tottenham Court Road in London, as well as recognised CP members.

shelters had been legitimised by the government's caving into demand. The 'myth of the blitz' underscores this shift in the portrayal of the shelters' significance, and the potential, if unintended role that Moore's drawings played therein.

The freedom afforded to Moore under the scheme was largely down to the enthusiastic support of Clark who appeared to want to commission 'masterpieces' from the very best of avant-garde artists alongside the more purposeful and less expressive works commissioned unequivocally as propaganda.<sup>303</sup> The distinction was made clear in 1942 when Clark wrote to Moore to express his concern about a mooted comparison of the *Shelter Drawings* with Bill Brandt's photo-reportages on the same subject in the pages of *Lilliput*, a proto-low-brow monthly magazine set up in 1937 by the Hungarian photojournalist Stefan Lorant with the assistance of Tom Hopkinson.<sup>304</sup>

Tom Hopkinson has just sent me a feature consisting of a series of your drawings to be reproduced opposite photographs by Bill Brandt. He asked me if I would write about the comparison. I am sure he would not publish them without having asked you, but I must tell you that I think the confrontation of your drawings with photographs very disturbing and likely to mislead rather than enlighten people. Even someone with a trained eye cannot switch over from a photographic to a formal way of looking at things. If you have not seen the comparisons, I think you ought to look at them before they are published, in case you feel about them as I do.<sup>305</sup>

Clark's concern might be ascribed to his desire to cast Moore's works as artistic representations of the universal human condition, and resolutely distinct from the details of the every day.<sup>306</sup> In his memoirs, Clark wrote:

Above all the tube shelter gave Henry Moore a subject that humanized his classical feeling for the recumbent figure and led to a series of drawings which will, I am

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<sup>303</sup> Robert Hewison, for one, has noted that Clark's "private fortune" allowed him to support artists like Moore and Sutherland personally as well as professionally, a fact of considerable importance to his valuation, both aesthetically and financially, of Moore's work. Hewison, *Culture & Consensus*, p.37

<sup>304</sup> Tom Hopkinson took over the editorship of both *Lilliput* and *Picture Post*, which they had also set up, when Lorant departed England for the United States in 1940.

<sup>305</sup> Letter from KC to HM, 25<sup>th</sup> September 1942, Kenneth Clark Papers, Tate Archive TGA/8812/1/1/3

<sup>306</sup> Upon introducing them in his book on Moore's drawings, Clark drew attention to Moore's estimation that the shelter drawings may have represented a return in Moore's mind to the visual lessons he had learnt in Italy on a Royal College scholarship. In mentioning the link, Clark also implicitly suggests a relation between these works and the collection of the National Gallery which he was the Director of, rendering them part of the same trajectory and somehow suitable as stand ins whilst the National collection remained in storage for the duration of the war.



certain, always be considered the greatest works of art *inspired* [my italics] by the war.<sup>307</sup>

But it is likely the comparison with Brandt alone was not the problem so much as its intended location.

Subtitled 'the monthly magazine for everyone', Lilliput was set up as an avowedly populist monthly magazine with literary pretensions: "an intelligent magazine for intelligent people" as they described themselves in an editorial of 1940.<sup>308</sup> The magazine compiled short stories, opinion pieces, poems and, increasingly as the war progressed, first-person narratives concerned with the experience of war. But what marked the journal out were its cartoons and its witty and pointed use of photographs.<sup>309</sup> In each issue of *Lilliput*, dispersed throughout the volume, was a feature known as 'doubles' in which photographs were presented in juxtaposition with either satirical or comic intent, or more simply to expose uncanny formal similarities between unrelated things. The photographs were frequently stock images, presumably poured through at incredible length to find these jarring comparisons, but also included portrait photographs, artistic reproductions, and photo-reportage by the likes of Brassai, Ferenc Berko and, frequently, Brandt.

One such example from the same issue as the Moore and Brandt comparison is illustrative of the subversive narratives made possible through these comparisons. On the left, a photograph by Douglas Glass depicts the aftermath of a bomb blast at London's Temple Church where Henry Hugh Armstead's sculptures of the Knights Templar lie pathetically among the wreckage, their bodies broken and their weapons rendered useless. On the right, dozens of Finnish troops have been photographed sprawled in a make shift camp, awaiting further orders (fig.39). The images conflate the experience of war across centuries and emasculate the soldiers depicted: monuments to the heroic dead and those potentially about to suffer such a fate.

Making for pseudo-surrealist photographic pairings in terms reminiscent of the challenging confrontations presented in the surrealist journal *Documents*, which one might presume was a touchstone of sorts, these images disrupt the narrative of war's justness, thus complimenting the presentation of Moore and Brandt's works a few pages earlier (figs.40-42).

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<sup>307</sup> Kenneth Clark, *The Other Half: A Self-Portrait* (William Clowes & Sons Ltd, London, 1977), p.23

<sup>308</sup> *Lilliput*, vol.7, no.2 (No.38), August 1940; quoted in Judy Stove, "An Air-Raid Siren for the Left", *The New Criterion*, vol.24, no.1, September 1<sup>st</sup> 2005, p.93

<sup>309</sup> *Lilliput* included cartoons by the likes of David Low, James Boswell and Ronald Searle, and was the first publication to feature Searle's well-recognised *St. Trinian's* cartoon.

Of the surrealist intent, Rick Poynor has written:

There are moments when the Surrealist method implicit in these chance encounters between images becomes unmistakable. It's possible that Lorant knew nothing of Buñuel and Dalí's *Un Chien Andalou* (1928), which opens with the slicing of a woman's eyeball by a razor. (In reality, it was a dead calf's eye — in the shock of the moment, the resemblance is close enough.) But it seems unlikely that a cosmopolitan filmmaker, photographer and newsman would have been unaware of this scandalous film. Either way, Lorant's uneasy, if not cruel, juxtaposition of a calf's eye and a girl's eye cannot fail to recall the alarm generated by that notorious scene and its sly, audience-befuddling substitution of organs (fig.43).<sup>310</sup>

Tracing that idea forwards, the comparison of the British Museum's *Group of Branchides* (discussed with relation to Moore's early life-drawings of his wife) with one of Angus McBean's pseudo-surrealist photo-collages of disembodied heads in an issue of 1943 serves to make that suggested inheritance obvious (fig.44).

Sitting somewhere between *Documents* and the old guard of British magazine publications such as *Punch*, then, the light hearted and semi-satirical attitude to the war presented therein was quite contrary to what Clark intended with the works he had commissioned. Remember that the WAAC existed fundamentally under the umbrella of the Ministry of Information which Clark also sat at the helm of.

Moore's response to Clark's worries read deferentially

I'm sorry that Tom Hopkinson has asked you to write about the comparison of Bill Brandt's shelter photographs + my drawings, because whether the idea of such a comparison is alright or not I'm sure its not important enough to have bothered you to write about it... Bill Brandt came here with his photographs + just for me personally I found an interest in seeing the differences + similarities... But probably I'm not at all the one to judge how other people would react to seeing the photographs + my drawings side by side. So if you think that it's a misleading +disturbing comparison I shan't at all mind if it's not done... would you decide for me about it, because as far as I'm concerned I don't really know, or mind?<sup>311</sup>

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<sup>310</sup> Rick Poynor, "On My Shelf: Stefan Lorant's Lilliput", *The Design Observer Group*, website, <http://designobserver.com/feature/on-my-shelf-stefan-lorants-lilliput/27648> last accessed 31<sup>st</sup> August 2014

<sup>311</sup> Letter from HM to KC, 28<sup>th</sup> September 1942, Kenneth Clark Papers, Tate Archive TGA/8812/1/3/2040-2050

The apparent naivety of Moore's response suggests something of his reverence for Clark. This appears all the more so when we consider that not only did the proposed comparison go ahead, but in Hopkinson's memoirs he suggested that the article had in fact originated from what was then a semi-regular lunch meeting between him and Moore.<sup>312</sup>

We used to meet regularly for lunch, sometimes every week, at a restaurant called Gourmets in Lisle Street... One day he produced a book of drawings which he was making around the tubes and underground shelters. I looked through them fascinated and asked if we might reproduce some of them in *Lilliput*. He was happy to let us use them, and Bill Brandt took a series of shelter drawings to appear in the same number.<sup>313</sup>

The notes published alongside the comparison in the pages of *Lilliput* appeared to reflect something of Clark's desire to distinguish between the two mediums. On the first page of the feature (fig.45), alongside an image capturing Moore at work in his studio, the captions read:

In the following pages we reproduce shelter drawings by the sculptor, Henry Moore, alongside photographs by Bill Brandt. These were quite independently, in the early part of the 1940 blitz, before official shelters had been organized. Obviously no comparison in artistic value is intended; a photograph, however imaginative, is the record of a scene; a work of art sets out to convey the formal and emotional idea behind the scene. We print them together because it appears to us that in this case photographs and drawings increase the understanding and appreciation of each other.<sup>314</sup>

But the idea that Moore was only 'inspired' by the war, rather than directly affected by and thus intent on addressing it, remains problematic. Similarly problematic is this distinction between a 'work of art' and a photograph, as though the latter were merely a factual document and the former an emotionally charged entity liberated from context. Indeed, Calder has addressed the importance of the influence of "surrealist practices" on social-realists such as Brandt and Bert Hardy who were keenly aware of the power of their images to present a version of the 'truth' just as the war artists were.<sup>315</sup>

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<sup>312</sup> "Henry Moore – portfolio of his air-raid shelter drawings", *Lilliput*, vol.11, no.6 (No.66), December 1942

<sup>313</sup> Tom Hopkinson, *Of This Our Time: A Journalist's Story* (Hutchinson, London, 1982), p.229

<sup>314</sup> *Lilliput*, Vol.11, No.6, December 1942, p.473

<sup>315</sup> Calder, *The Myth of the Blitz*, p.142

The extent of Moore's recourse to photographic sources was addressed directly and with significant implications by David Mellor who identified Moore's direct reference to a photo by Brandt published in *Picture Post* in October 1940 (fig.46) for the work *Women and Children in the Tube*.<sup>316</sup> That *Picture Post* was also edited by Lorent and Hopkinson suggests those casual lunches on Lisle Street might well have had a greater impact on Moore's approach to the *Shelter Drawings* than has been accounted for.

In Mellor's discussion of Moore's recourse to Brandt's work he suggests that the resulting "skewed integration of these copies from press photos into a misty, disintegrative and romantic version of a Tube platform scene" was "indicative of the way in which [Moore] was bound up – along with the rest of the population under aerial siege – in a universe of photo-generated imagery."<sup>317</sup> Certainly, the ready availability of such visual stimulus contributed to the collective experience and understanding of war. Indeed, the interchange was mutual, as Mellor also discusses with relation to the way both Moore's *Shelter Drawings* and Brandt's photos were included in the 1941 exhibition at MOMA entitled *Britain at War*.<sup>318</sup> Both artworks and photographs were equally considered appropriate and appropriable renderings of the experience of war suitable to be exhibited in the archetypal modern art gallery of the day. Both were also drawn upon for the 1944 film *Out of Chaos*, directed by Jill Craigie, which recreated the experience of the shelters during the Blitz.

There is an inverse symmetry to the way Moore's conceived of his experiences in the first instant as un-'like a cinematograph', and the way they were translated into cinematographic film by way of his subsequent artistic renditions, thus rendering the experience of the bombing at a twofold remove from reality, and in the service of misinformation. No wonder a mythic version of the blitz was perpetuated with such success. But we might also note Moore's proximity to Hopkinson and apparent interest in and recourse to the presentation of imagery in both *Picture Post* and, more resonantly, *Lilliput*, to consider Moore's investment in the role of images as implicitly mis-informative traced through a line of inheritance from the surreal experiments of *Documents*.<sup>319</sup>

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<sup>316</sup> Mellor, "And Oh! The Stench", pp.54-55. In his introductory essay for the catalogue, Stephens suggests that "the revelation of Moore's appropriation of photographic sources far greater than hitherto imagined opens up a whole new area for research and quite another, more profane, image of the artist." To reorient the point, I would suggest that advances in the availability and type of photographic sources provided Moore with the means by which to expound his response to war in a manner that both complemented and concealed the full breadth of his artistic intentionality; see Stephens, *Henry Moore*, exhibition, p.17

<sup>317</sup> Mellor, "And Oh! The Stench", p.56

<sup>318</sup> Ibid, p.59

<sup>319</sup> See pp.89-90 of this thesis

It might then be important to recognise the extent to which Moore's wanted to hide this visual appropriation. He even went so far as to tell Alan Wilkinson that the work in question was the first he produced in direct relation to the shelters, the day after, in fact – the 12<sup>th</sup> August 1940 – thus covering over his having borrowed from a photo published a month later.<sup>320</sup> The almost romanticised haziness of that scene in distinction to those previously discussed works which speak emphatically of the chaos of war suggests something of the work's lengthy gestation.

But Moore's turn to the facts of photo-reportage stakes a claim for his troglodytic mothers' existence, or at least origins, in real and immediate space and time. That in opposition to what might be the overriding effect of Moore's *Shelter Drawings* seen as a whole: a watered down, over thought and almost ponderous repetition of ideas on a single theme, thus diluting the force of their poignancy.<sup>321</sup>

In a review of WAAC works exhibited towards the end of the war at the National Gallery, the social realist painter Carel Weight attacked Moore's *Shelter Drawings* in a review for *Out of Time* for exactly that lack of specificity: their lack of direct relation to the efforts of those they attested to depict:

among those [pictures] recording the civilian side of the struggle are paintings of underground shelters, coal miners, etc, which appear more like abstractions from Etruscan sculpture than anxious Cockney flesh and blood and those heroic but human workers of the North.<sup>322</sup>

He was referring also to the drawings of miners Moore produced in 1943 for the WAAC, and overarchingly of only those works exhibited: the works chosen to be representative and suitable for the National Gallery. But to trace Moore's works in direct relation to the opening of the shelters – examples of popular and political insurgency – and with relation to his purposeful and direct experience of the suffering therein is to render them avowedly and intentionally anxious, or anguished, not to mention politicised, and political. That the form of his response was not so obvious as to render them one-dimensional, and that he was able to assemble a formal language composed of 'abstracted' elements of archaic,

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<sup>320</sup> Mellor, "And Oh! The Stench", p.55

<sup>321</sup> Indeed that criticism has been levelled at Moore's entire career. In a review of the 2010 Moore show at Tate, Laura Cumming wrote: "His work became as repetitive as it has become familiar; this tends to neutralise whatever power it may have. All of which presents problems for anyone wishing to make us look at it once again with anything like new eyes." Laura Cumming, "Henry Moore at Tate Britain", *The Observer*, 28 February 2010

<sup>322</sup> Carel Weight, "The War Artist's Exhibition", *Our Time*, August 1944, Vol. 4, No. 1; quoted in Hyman, *the Battle for Realism*, p. 91

classical, early modern and contemporaneous styles is the result of his appreciation of both the immediate and the extended connotations of what he experienced in the shelters, bringing us again to Clement Greenberg. To place Moore's work "about halfway between the classical and the new" is not only to question its avant-garde credentials, it is almost to render it ahistorical, anomalous. Moore's work speaks rather across that gap. If the history of the human form as practised artistically speaks of anything, it is the continued desire to understand ourselves.

In a self-penned and self-directed note from 1940 amongst a series of drawings of seated mothers and children produced before the shelter drawings, Moore meditated on the purpose of such reflective expressions of the human form:

The human body is what we know most about, because its ourselves: and so it moves us most strongly we make complete / identify with it... It is the integrity dynamic which counts, as though his intention was so / tremendously important to him that it comes... shining through without being anywhere near achieved.<sup>323</sup>

In an entry for the work from the catalogue for Moore's 1988 exhibition at the Royal Academy, it is written: "The text reveals the heart-searching that Moore went through on account of the need he felt to devise a more humanist art."<sup>324</sup>

But if Moore's work is to be characterised as 'humanist', what then are we to make of his conception of the human impact of war? What do the details of his illustrations of women and children being bombed, and rendered statuesque – literally lifeless, immobile – tell us specifically about his response to war? If Moore's turn to figuration during wartime is to be read as indicative of a reconciliation of his modernist aversions with what he called his "humanist side", to potentially trace the development of these ideas back even before 1936 and the start of the Spanish Civil War shifts the complexion of Moore's reason for doing so.<sup>325</sup> His conception of the fundamental role of the human form in his work, and of his valuation of 'human relationships' and the ability of art to convey that sense, is fundamental to an approach, yes, humanist, but not unquestioningly or acquiescently so.

For all of Calder's delineation of the fallacy at the heart of the Blitz's presentation, he falls obediently in line with the public rendering of Moore's works as humanist, heroic even. "Odoriferous slum dwellers, frightened small businessmen, these cannot be: they are an

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<sup>323</sup> HMF1484

<sup>324</sup> Compton, *Henry Moore*, p.219

<sup>325</sup> Wilkinson, *The Drawings of Henry Moore*, p.36

image of Humanity itself, in heroic repose.”<sup>326</sup> But in the final part of Mellor’s argument concerning the Shelter Drawings’ he registered the problem of the shelter drawings’ after lives given their proximity to the experience of such direct suffering.

That Moore’s shelter drawings have been canonised as human masterpieces appears paradoxical, considering their construction as Gothic works at the borders of the unfigurable and unspeakable.<sup>327</sup>

Such was the impact of war that Moore was responding to; the impact of which brought about the attestations of ‘never again’ that pre-determined something of the shape and substance of post-war reconstruction. It is into that domain that I will relocate Moore’s *Madonna and Child* in the following chapter, produced in the aftermath of the Blitz and in relation to the same social circumstances and artistic criteria as those works discussed above.

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<sup>326</sup> Calder, *The Myth of the Blitz*, p.143

<sup>327</sup> Mellor, ““And Oh! The Stench””, p.62

#### 4. 'Not Just a Mother and Child': a Wartime Madonna

In an article of 1992, Julian Stallabrass succinctly identified that Moore's completion of the Madonna in 1944 was the point at which it was "widely accepted that Moore had broken with his narrow and elitist avant-garde concerns in order to embrace a wider 'humanism'."<sup>328</sup> It is a view which has been perpetuated, though Stallabrass methodically demonstrated the falseness of that dichotomy; avant-garde *or* humanist, given Moore's subsequent ascent to popular acclaim in the following years.

It was essential that the chosen figurehead of British art should be not only involved with human, rather than merely formalist interests, but should be an avant-garde individualist, freely expressing his or her originality.<sup>329</sup>

What was 'essential' about Moore's work in the midst of war was perhaps lost in the context of post-war artistic developments that left Moore's figurative turn anomalous and retrogressive. But Stallabrass suggests that Moore's turn to representation in the preceding years might "be seen as a reaction against sentimental treatments of the subject", and an at least partly ironic one at that.<sup>330</sup>

In support of his argument, Stallabrass references an inadvertently perceptive review of Moore's 1947 show at the Museum of Modern Art from which the following quotation is taken:

When [Moore's] compositions or constructions retain a marked representational quality his purpose is not seldom satirical, his method semi-surrealist. Mr. Moore's clay or terra cotta imbeciles... leave an impression of horror... [and] it is possible to

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<sup>328</sup> Stallabrass, "Henry Moore: Mother and Child", pp.17-18

<sup>329</sup> Ibid

<sup>330</sup> Ibid



read a good deal of unconscious symbolism in a personal idiom of the sculptor's in many of these works.<sup>331</sup>

The reviewer's critique is astute, and develops an argument set out at the onset of the article:

An eye for sculpture may never have been very common, but it is certain that in abandoning the Greek and Renaissance ideal of physical beauty in art a great deal of modern sculpture has become completely unintelligible to the untrained.<sup>332</sup>

The article's intent is disparaging, and intended as a rebuke to the Modernist challenge to convention. But the obverse of the reviewers' argument, of course, would be the simple act of providing the necessary 'training'; education by any other name.<sup>333</sup>

I would argue, also, that the identification of Moore's 'personal idiom' in the text signposts the way to a reading of Moore's work underwritten by its composite qualities. The narrow confines of artistic success as defined by this writer would soon be trampled over by the further onset of internationalisation in the post-war period that Moore's appropriatory resolve might then be seen as a harbinger of.

In tracing the lines of development in Moore's conception of the mother and child theme from before the war through all of its sources, and then through his wartime reconfiguration of the theme before the Madonna of 1943-44, we might locate the results of what Pevsner would call his 'patient listening'.<sup>334</sup> That is, in paying close attention to Moore's integration of formal and theoretical precedents for these public works, ranging from the acceptably 'humanist' to the unacceptably primitive and political, and by relating the potential significance of these experiments to the politically unstable years in question, the results might suggest 'avant-garde concerns' perfectly in keeping with, or complementary to the openness of their purpose: his participation in the public sphere.

It was Moore's acceptance and completion of this commission that got him unceremoniously booted out of the Surrealist group in 1947; "fabrication d'ornements sacerdotaux" was the charge.<sup>335</sup> Yet as I hope to demonstrate, Moore's pursuit of ambiguous and challenging private works simultaneous with his public efforts suggests a

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<sup>331</sup> Richard Denis Charques, "The Elemental in Sculpture", *Times Literary Supplement*, August 16 1947, Iss. 2376, p.413

<sup>332</sup> Charques, "The Elemental in Sculpture", p.413

<sup>333</sup> The role of education and, more particularly, cultural policy in redefining sensibilities to British modernism sits at the heart of the second section of this thesis.

<sup>334</sup> See p.66

<sup>335</sup> "Déclaration du groupe surréaliste en Angleterre", *Le Surréalisme en 1947* (Maeght Éditeur, Paris, 1947) p.46. Berthoud translates the phrase as the "making of sacred ornaments"; Berthoud, *The Life of Henry Moore*, p. 162

desire to balance those forces, or to juxtapose them purposefully. Indeed, James Hyman noted that in stripping the subject of the virgin mother of “anything remotely religious”, this commission “led the way conceptually” to defining Moore’s subsequent turn to becoming the public sculptor *par excellence* in the post-war period.<sup>336</sup> At the centre of this must be an appreciation of Moore’s conception of the distinction between public and private space, and the appropriate shape of works intended for those spaces.

It was in an exhibition of war art at the National Gallery that Revd. Walter Hussey, canon of St. Mathew’s Church in Northampton, came across Moore’s *Shelter Drawings* for the first time. It was the beginning of a relationship with Moore that led to the commissioning of the Hornton Stone *Madonna and Child* to commemorate his church’s silver jubilee in 1943.<sup>337</sup>

In his memoirs years later, Hussey wrote of how he was “tremendously impressed” by these drawings by an artist otherwise unknown to him, writing that their “dignity and three-dimensional quality seemed to make anything that was unfortunate enough to be hanging near them appear flat and dull.”<sup>338</sup> This sentence captures perfectly the difference between Moore’s *Shelter Drawings* and the broader output produced for the WAAC by lesser known and less adventurous artists, even to an untrained eye.<sup>339</sup> In particular, it appears significant that Hussey noticed the sculptural qualities of Moore’s drawings, being that the nature of their three-dimensionality was at a remove from Moore’s approach to sculpture as practised before the war, though not out of keeping with his plans for the Senate House reliefs or his most recent works that existed, for the most part, in lieu of the artist’s ability to work sculpturally.

On his return to Northampton, Hussey signalled his admiration of the artist’s work to Harold Williamson, Director of the Chelsea School of Art which had been relocated to Northampton in 1941 to escape the worst of the bombing in London. Hussey doesn’t seem to have known that, until the outbreak of war, Moore had taught at Chelsea, but he recalled “shaking my finger” at Williamson and proclaiming: “That is the sort of man who ought to be working for the Church – his work has the dignity and force that is desperately needed today”.<sup>340</sup>

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<sup>336</sup> Hyman, *The Battle for Realism*, p.90

<sup>337</sup> Hussey, *Patron of Art*, pp.24-25

<sup>338</sup> Ibid, p.23

<sup>339</sup> Hussey had known the galleries of Mayfair from the time of his training in London, but from an interested outsider point of view rather than as a convert.

<sup>340</sup> Ibid, p.23

Williamson arranged for the two to meet the following week when Moore was visiting Northampton to teach a class, at which point Hussey expressed his feelings to the artist. In his autobiography, Hussey recalled his first conversation with Moore:

I asked him whether he thought he would be interested in the project; he replied that he would, though whether it could go further, whether he could and would want to do it, he just couldn't say... I asked whether he would *believe* in the subject and he replied: 'Yes, I would. Though whether or not I should agree with your theology, I just do not know. I think it is only through our art that we artists can come to understand your theology.'<sup>341</sup>

Moore's differentiation between the subject of a religious commission and its theological meaning suggests from the outset his conception of the readily appropriable nature of the art historical tropes Hussey might have had in mind. With Moore having agreed to consider the commission after their first meeting in late 1942, Hussey convinced his father, the previous canon of St. Matthew's church, to finance the work which was eventually completed, after the church's jubilee celebrations, in early 1944 (fig.47).

Moore wrote to Hussey on the 29 April 1943 after a brief correspondence to confirm that he had "begun notebook sketches for it", and again on the 23 June to proclaim that he had "waited until I could tell you that at least I had begun making little clay sketch ideas of the statue."<sup>342</sup> In that brief period, Moore had filled a sketchbook with ideas, identified in the catalogue raisonné as the *Madonna and Child Sketchbook* (Figs.48-56).<sup>343</sup>

Undated sequentially and sketched haphazardly, one idea overlapping another in varying media, the inconsistent and alternating levels of finish in these sketches suggests they may have been developed simultaneously, Moore flipping back and forth between pages and ideas. This suggests an experimental approach to the commission, developing ideas in numerous directions, and with an eye to numerous precedents, and not only those previously considered for the Senate House commission and the Shelter Drawings. Rather, Moore appears to be developing forms and stylistic traits experimented with previously by way of more appropriate referents for a Madonna. The resulting sculpture was the culmination of this extended study into the potential sculptural form of the mother and

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<sup>341</sup> Ibid, pp.23–24

<sup>342</sup> Ibid, pp.27–28

<sup>343</sup> It is from these early sketches that all twelve of the subsequently produced clay maquettes appear to have been drawn, to varying extents.

child traced back through histories of representational form, and with relation to both the promise of education *and* its refutation in the throes of war.

John Russell pertinently described the results of Moore's engagement with the Virgin mother as a negotiation "between his previous practice and his recollections of Florentine sculpture."<sup>344</sup> Indeed, throughout these drawings, the forms considered are distinctly those of an artist engaged with renaissance forms, and negotiating his way towards a solution which integrated his previous experiments into a form identifiable as a Madonna in the Western tradition, and particularly the Italian traditions first engaged with fully by Moore on a 1925 study trip to Italy with a Royal Academy Scholarship.<sup>345</sup>

But in what appear to be the earliest two maquettes produced towards the commission (figs.57 and 58), Moore's thought process doesn't seem to have yet strayed too far from the artistic developments discussed in the previous chapter. In what is presumably the earlier of the two, a unique work in terra cotta, Moore's seems only to have modelled quickly a rough formal precedent for his later experiments, whilst the latter work seems the sculptural equivalent of the mother in *Women and Children in the Tube* appropriated from Brandt. Indeed, her above knee-length dress, the awkward angle of her lower legs, and the familiarity of her maternal posture lead the art historian Will Grohmann to define this work as still "no more than a mother and child".<sup>346</sup> It might be suggested that in his responses to the commission, Moore was still caught up in the moment of war that had inspired his *Shelter Drawings*, and in directly contrasting historical renditions of the Madonna theme with his own artistic practice and feelings for form on the pages of the *Madonna and Child sketchbook*, he appears to be attempting to reconcile the difference between his own predilection for form and the demands of the commission.

Among the sketches Moore produced towards the commission, the drawing to which this work most closely relates can be found on the right hand side of a single page on which two representations of the Madonna and Child were attempted (fig.59). This hurriedly drawn and seemingly incomplete depiction appears quite ordinary and conventional in contrast with the instantly recognisable Madonna and Child on the left of the page which relates more closely to conventional Western depictions of the Virgin and Child, with the form of three works known to Moore of particular influence.

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<sup>344</sup> Russell, *Henry Moore*, p. 119

<sup>345</sup> See p.60

<sup>346</sup> Will Grohmann, *The Art of Henry Moore*, translated Michael Bullock, (Reader's Union, London 1966), p.139

Two of these Renaissance precedents were known to Moore from the National Collection; Donatello's 1455-1460 terracotta relief of the *Virgin and Child* from the V&A (fig.60) and Masaccio's *Madonna and Child with Angels* in tempera from 1426, housed in the National Gallery (fig.61).<sup>347</sup> Moore spoke about the latter of these specifically in his important essay of 1937 *The Sculptor Speaks* with relation to the importance of scale and power in a work, whilst we might presume he knew a third work of similar form – the *Benois Madonna* of 1478 by Leonardo (fig.62) – from Clark's book on the artist. In a letter of 1939, Moore congratulated Clark on his publication – one which included a figure of the work – writing: "The whole spirit of it, the values + mental attitude it creates, - is just what we mustn't let the war destroy or dim".<sup>348</sup> This suggestion of an extended engagement with the historical meanings and implications of art is illustrative of Moore's understanding of its potentialities, too.

In the margins of his sketchbooks, meanwhile, Moore made reference to the "simple Grandeur of Chichester Romanesque" and to "Tinto[retto]'s white crayon technique", while Lichtenstern has also made formal comparisons to the archaic *Group of Branchides* from Didyma from the British Museum depicted in *Lilliput* at about the same time, returning us once more to the breadth of Moore's art historical literacy and the potentially subversive nature of his formal invocations.<sup>349</sup> Centuries of Christian and pagan iconography were subsumed within his notebook pages, learnt both first- and second-hand; the results of an interested and diligent eye.

Whereas his *Shelter Drawings* had literally come to take the place of works from the National Collection in the years preceding, thus taking on the gravitas and the poignancy of those works within the context of war, however, now he would take the opportunity to produce a series of works directly resonant of, and in conversation with, those stylistic forebears, and with apparent recourse to the humanistic histories of art.<sup>350</sup> The involvement of Kenneth Clark previously as patron was now extended to fit his role as connoisseur. Moore asked him to be responsible for choosing the maquette to be scaled up from the five most suitable of the twelve studies. This was done in Clark's office at the

<sup>347</sup> In an essay of 1988 Richard Cork compared Moore's Madonna with the Masaccio, while Lichtenstern made the comparison fuller with specific reference to these preparatory drawings. Richard Cork, "An Art of the Open Air: Moore's Major Public Sculpture", *Henry Moore*, exhibition (Royal Academy, London, 1988), pp.14-26; Lichtenstern, *Henry Moore: Work – Theory – Impact*, p.161

<sup>348</sup> Letter from Henry Moore to Kenneth Clark, October 1<sup>st</sup> 1939, Kenneth Clark Papers, Tate Archive TGA8812/1/3/2002-2030

<sup>349</sup> HMF2175a and HMF2181a; Henry Moore, "The Sculptor Speaks"; Lichtenstern, *Henry Moore: Work Theory Impact*, pp.135-136

<sup>350</sup> Lichtenstern, *Henry Moore: Work – Theory – Impact*, pp.123-173

National Gallery in the company of Moore, Hussey and their acquaintance Jasper Ridley, and having made the decision, Moore stated “it is the best – the most interesting”.<sup>351</sup> Grohmann’s measure of the early maquette’s unsuitability might then be compared to Clark’s response to the chosen one to illustrate Moore’s development of the theme: “He has thought the whole thing out afresh and very deeply. It is a Madonna and Child you have got there, not just a Mother and Child.”<sup>352</sup>

Moore would later describe his impression of the difference between representations of a mother and a Madonna thus: ‘It’s not easy to describe in words what this difference is, except by saying in general terms that the ‘Madonna and Child’ should have an austerity, and a nobility and some touch of grandeur (even hieratic aloofness), which is missing in the ‘everyday’ Mother and Child idea.’<sup>353</sup> Moore’s identification of the formal attributes he attempted to imbue in his *Madonna and Child* maquettes produced during wartime speak closely of his apparent concerns here (even though, significantly, they were modelled in clay): “I have tried to give a sense of complete easiness and repose, as though the Madonna could stay in the position for ever (as being in stone she will have to do)”.<sup>354</sup>

More immediate precedents for Moore’s Madonna have been shown to come from English church sculpture and architecture, as discussed by Penelope Curtis and Fiona Russell. In particular, they draw attention to Moore’s own account of the impression left on him by the tomb sculptures in Methley Church, Yorkshire that he visited on school trips (fig.63).<sup>355</sup> The formal comparison is vague, but the idea is backed up with an astute reference to Frederick Wight’s writing on Moore’s *Shelter Drawings*:

They have a static life more intense than ours, that is devoid of incident. Their clothes (in the drawings) are cerements. They have the Lazarus look, they are brought like Alcestis from the grave. Moore is dealing here with mortality and immortality... [and] is particularly concerned with *immovability, permanence* and *eternity*... Moore’s deepest theme is resurrection.<sup>356</sup>

Wight’s attempt to locate these underground populations between life and death, or in both states at once, insufficiently accounts for the relation of those works – and particularly their subject – to the direct experience of war and the oft-repeated promise that after the

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<sup>351</sup> Hussey, *Patron of Art*, p.28

<sup>352</sup> Ibid, p.29

<sup>353</sup> Ibid, p.33

<sup>354</sup> Hussey, *Patron of Art*, p.32

<sup>355</sup> Curtis and Russell, “Henry Moore and the post-war British landscape”, pp.128-130, see p.47

<sup>356</sup> Frederick Wight, “Henry Moore: The Reclining Figure”, *The Journal of Aesthetics and Art Criticism*, Vol.6, No.2 (December 1947), pp.103-104

war things would be done differently. Writing in 1947, it might have been too soon to fully account for the implications of Moore's attested proclamations of 'resurrection'. But even Curtis and Russell, who are interested more generally in the relation of Moore's subsequent works to the post-war landscape, decline to comment on the nature of post-war reconstruction as the obverse of such an expression of simultaneous life and death. Wight's analogical invocation of the rescue of Alcestis from the grips of Hades might, indeed, be the perfect metaphor for this.

To see Moore's Madonna as an extension of his drawings of London during the Blitz might then explain this interest in death and rebirth which becomes, rather than a comment on religiosity, idolatry and salvation, something like a humanitarian comment on the ability to move beyond and grow out of the horrors of such an experience as the Second World War, a comparable equivalent to the promises of the Beveridge report published one year earlier.<sup>357</sup>

Moore's synthesis of the lessons of antiquity, the Italian renaissance and the English gothic and in the midst of war might then illustrate the extent to which Moore's art historical literacy was as broad as it was engaged. The apparent universality of the final work belied the diversity of encounters on the pages of his sketchbooks, and indeed the incongruity of some of the match-ups. Ironed out in the subsequent years, these incongruities were keenly felt at the time of the work's unveiling, when Kenneth Clark underwrote his veneration of the work's beauty with a warning worth quoting at length.

[I]n the last hundred years [the church] has felt itself bound to place in churches works of art which were so obvious and so devoid of any pronounced character that they should be immediately understandable to everybody... it was thought that these very simple works of art would encourage simple people to come to church, and more complex works might frighten them away. If people need the encouragement of smooth pretty faces and obvious colours, I feel that form of encouragement is no longer valid, because there are the cinemas providing the same kind of obvious appeal to millions of people in a way which we must admit is much more immediately exciting...

It is for this reason that I believe we owe a great debt to Canon Hussey and the Vicar of this Church, for having set out to employ the best artists and musicians for making this church and making these services a joy to all who worship here... and in

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<sup>357</sup> Sir William Beveridge, *Social Insurance and Allied Services: A Report* (HMSO, London, 1942)

commissioning the best of great art he has shown great courage, because we must always face the fact that for a time great art is often different, disturbing, even shocking.

The figure which I have the honour to unveil in a moment may worry some simple people, it may raise indignation in the minds of self-centred people, and it may lead arrogant people to protest. But I am sure there will be many people in this building who do not pretend any great familiarity with the arts in general or with the modern idioms of art, who will feel every day more and more the fundamental beauty of this figure.<sup>358</sup>

It is interesting, though hardly surprising, that Clark stops short of approaching the meaningfulness of the work's "disturbing, even shocking" elements – of equating these aspects of the work with the contemporaneous experience of war – given his promotion of the 'universal' aspects of Moore's shelter drawings. Rather, he renders the work's disquiet as a minor note of the work's inherent and emergent beauty.

Furthermore, Clark's attention to the nature of visual entertainment in modern society as distinct from artistic endeavour is a pertinent stand in for that oft-repeated explanation of modernist practice more generally, where realism is reneged upon in response to the advent of photographic accuracy, leading to a fragmentation of form. But his identification of the popular role of cinema also fundamentally addresses the changing nature of society, of leisure time and of spiritual belief in Britain in the forties.

In his survey of Britain in the post-war period, David Kynaston quotes the Daily Mail's war correspondent James Lansdale Hodson who noted in his diary that 90% of people "seldom or never attend church", and that the church each week had five million attendances, while the cinemas had 40 million. Kynaston follows this with a discussion of the waning interest in religion in Britain, and especially in the midst of war, given the impending sense of hopelessness brought on by the experience of war; the carpet bombing of London most close to home.<sup>359</sup> In returning to and working from his studies towards the Senate House commission and the *Shelter Drawings*, Moore conflates the deep and troubling sense of futility brought in by war with a narrative of human endeavour and of human spirit,

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<sup>358</sup> Hussey, *Patron of Art*, pp. 41-42. Hussey would also commission a cantata from Benjamin Britten and a painted crucifixion from Graham Sutherland for St. Matthew's, a testament to his engagement with contemporaneous British avant-garde culture of that time. In his later career as the Dean of Chichester, he would continue this pattern by continuing to commission and to collect works. His collection, left to the city of Chichester after his death, makes up a significant part of the collection of the Pallant House Gallery there.

<sup>359</sup> David Kynaston, *Austerity Britain 1945-51* (Bloomsbury, London, 2007), p. 125, quoting James Lansdale Hodson, *The Way Things Are* (V. Gollancz, London, 1947), p. 299



reanimating the *Madonna and Child's* significance in appropriately contemporary terms, underwritten by a sense that salvation is not at hand.

Look again at the (Christ) child, gazing out from its mother's distracted grasp with a solemn concern written across its face (Fig.64). There is no sense of lightness or of protection about this work. Or take the mother's posture which now appears strained and protective, containing the child defensively, rather than lovingly, and glancing away expectantly, concernedly. Rather than beauty, or salvation, this work is about endurance and the human spirit; the collective will to resist hardship and overcome adversity. The child here exists quite simply as a signifier for a future to come as and when the war is over.

Astutely, if unintentionally, one member of the Northampton congregation told their local paper.

The much-discussed statue of the Madonna and Child is, in my opinion, a monstrosity better suited to a museum than an Anglican church, and is more calculated to distract than deepen devotion. The physique of the Madonna appears to my, perhaps untutored, eyes to be out of all proportion to any human being who has ever lived. One likes to think of the Madonna as an ordinary but noble specimen of womanhood and not a physical freak.<sup>360</sup>

The differentiation and demarcation of museum and church here is an important one. That the museum was considered a suitable home for freaks and monstrosities, no longer the domain of morality and rationality, was not modernism's doing. But the continued understanding of 'art' outside of the realms of tradition and of convention potentialised the museum and the exhibition space as a place of subversion, of deviancy. To bring the two together was tantamount to blasphemy.

Here was Clark's expected indignation, but expounded in a way that adequately and helpfully accounts for a broader conception of the place of art in society. This was turned around, at least with regards to intention, in the post-war period, as will be discussed more fully with relation to Moore's *Family Group* from 1948-49. But in the context of wartime, Moore's Madonna was a troublesome work. Though the journalist and High Anglican Tom Driberg noted that he considered there was nothing "highbrow" about the work, it would

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<sup>360</sup> Anon., "Madonna Statue – Experts' Impressions", *Northampton Independent*, 25 February 1944 (Henry Moore Foundation Archive)

be incorrect to ignore the work's potential to challenge conventions (if not convictions?).<sup>361</sup>

The work's negotiation of these points is a mark of Moore's accomplishment.

On the nature of beauty in his work, Moore said

I think people often get muzzed by the use of the word 'beauty'. It's really a most misleading, misused and muddle-headed word in this context. People use it to avoid the issue and escape precise expression... But if you can get into the right kind of receptive and appreciative-creating ways of seeing, then the whole world is full of new ideas and new possibilities. One of the things that modern art has done is to open people's eyes in that way.<sup>362</sup>

More famously, in an essay published in the *Unit One* catalogue, Moore wrote

Beauty, in the later Greek or Renaissance sense, is not the aim in my sculpture. Between beauty of expression and power of expression there is a difference of function...

Because a work does not aim at reproducing natural appearances it is not, therefore, an escape from life – but may be a penetration into reality... an expression of the significance of life, a stimulation to greater effort in living.<sup>363</sup>

That was written in 1934 when Moore's tendency towards abstracted or surreal forms of representation was at its most advanced. That he was still so keen to declare his estimation of the "significance of life" helps to differentiate his purpose from that of the surrealists in particular, and helps to identify Moore's priorities. And just as his pre-war efforts in their relation of the human form were about the *essence* of living, his works produced during wartime – in their adherence to the specificities of the human form, and of lives lived – speak closely of the *realities* of human suffering which might be the political equivalent of an artistic recourse to stimulating a "greater effort in living". Each presents aspects of Moore's approach to opening people's eyes, artistically, to "new ideas and possibilities" about the progression of humanity, the full breadth of which might best be conveyed via his expansive and inclusive approach to cultural stimulus.

A more fruitful way in to discussing the performativity of Moore's work, then, might be approached via accounts of the Madonna's form that address its equivocations. Eric

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<sup>361</sup> Tom Driberg, *Reynold News*, 12 March 1944; quoted in Hussey, *Patron of Art*, p. 47

<sup>362</sup> John and Vera Russell, "Conversations with Henry Moore"

<sup>363</sup> Henry Moore, *Unit One: The Modern Movement in English Architecture, Painting and Sculpture* (Cassell and Company, London, 1934), p. 30, quoted in Herbert Read "Introduction" to David Sylvester (ed.), *Henry Moore: Volume One; Sculptures and Drawings 1921 – 1948* (1969 edition, LH, after 44 1<sup>st</sup> ed), p.xxi

Newton, the art critic for *The Times*, wrote of the Madonna in an article for the *Architectural Review* shortly after its unveiling in terms reminiscent of Clark's address.

For to-day no one knows quite what the Madonna of the twentieth-century should be. She disappeared at the end of the seventeenth century and was replaced in the 19<sup>th</sup> by a mass-producible plaster dummy. Now that Henry Moore has brought her back to life we are puzzled by the transformation she has undergone from the Michelangelo athletic goddess. She has returned with some of the clumsy dignity of the peasant and some of the inscrutable grandeur of the Sphinx.<sup>364</sup>

The time-lagged juxtaposition attests to the breadth of visual referents, whilst the final comparison suitably accounts for Moore's purpose: the commemoration of the war's casualties in a form potentially reminiscent of so grandiose a funerary monument as the Great Sphinx of Giza.

While the latter part of the juxtaposition is what catches the eye, it is the first part that most perceptively captures the relation of Moore's *Madonna* to his drawings of the effects of the blitz. Russell's invocation of the 'dignity of the peasant' also seems to describe something of the attitude to those who suffered in terms concomitant with Stallabrass's identification of the linkage between debates about the 'primitive' formulated after the First World War and the human effects thereof:

The war deeply affected the nature of the concept, in particular the perception of the existence of a savagery beneath a civilised exterior, the definition of barbarism on racial grounds, and the construction of an image of the British working-class fighting man.<sup>365</sup>

Might such a comparison debase this attested Madonna? Or merely humanise her? And is that the same thing?

In the same issue of the *Architectural Review*, Moore's friend Geoffrey Grigson addressed this question of Moore's re-designation of the Madonna's form in appropriately modern terms thus:

I think sometimes if were a parson, I could make a more imaginative and valuable job of it than a great many parsons, even if they are Christian and even if I am a pagan. And so with Henry Moore. I am certain – here is the proof – that he can

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<sup>364</sup> Eric Newton, "Henry Moore's Madonna and Child", *Architectural Review*, May 1944, p.140

<sup>365</sup> Julian Stallabrass, "The Idea of the Primitive: British Art and Anthropology 1918-1930", *New Left Review*, 183, September-October 1990, p.95

make a better Madonna and Child than any academic sculptor who has a habit of church going, a better solid prayer than most parsons can enunciate.<sup>366</sup>

The suggestion of Moore's 'theology' here is subtle, and is appreciative of the success of Moore's response to the brief, irrespective. Moore's 'prayer' is a secular one, but one concerned with the same questions that must have been asked throughout Europe in the early 1940s, even if the president of the Royal Academy, Sir Alfred Munnings, found it a "graven image".<sup>367</sup>

John Russell, meanwhile, suggested that in front of the Madonna, the viewer

shifts back and forth, unwittingly between the idioms of Easter Island and George Eliot, and the two are made to blend without incongruity. We end up by not quite knowing whether what we are looking at is an abstract composition in three perfectly judged dimensions or a straight portrait of a well-built Yorkshire mother with a commendably sober taste in embroidery.<sup>368</sup>

The hyperbole, reasoned and accounted for, moves between the numerous histories that have traced Moore's 'mother-complex' into his work and towards an account that renders his style in the midst of Moore's 'big world view' of sculpture. But it gestures towards Moore's recourse to the British Museum whilst pegging his work on a quintessentially English provincialism suffuse with class and sexual politics. By invoking George Eliot, Russell's account is anchored by an implied politicality located in local rather than grandiose terms, traceable back to Moore's Yorkshire roots and his affinity with his working-class origins. The sculpture's location in Northampton suits this role well, available publically to non-metropolitan church goers and interested parties rather than the learned audiences of galleries, museums and print media.

The gamut of referents, the implied politicality, and the considered appreciation of the origins of Moore's thematic concerns blending "without incongruity" all suggest a more complicated work than is accounted for in comments that take only its formal qualities – an "engagingly human work" that "exudes a reassuring warmth" – to define it.<sup>369</sup> Indeed, Margaret Garlake has proposed that Moore's success with the *Shelter Drawings* "might also

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<sup>366</sup> Geoffrey Grigson, "Henry Moore's Madonna and Child", *Architectural Review*, May 1944, p.139

<sup>367</sup> "The Patron of Art", BBC TV2 Recording, aired 4<sup>th</sup> November 1985, British Library sound recording archive

<sup>368</sup> Russell, *Henry Moore*, p.123

<sup>369</sup> Cork, "An Art of the Open Air", p.18

have encouraged him to acknowledge that a more easily read figurative art was capable of being both radical and popular.”<sup>370</sup>

As such, the work’s troublesome aspects and the connotations of its shifting form; the reasons why it was found worrisome, even monstrous at its unveiling, might be reasoned for by way of Lyndsey Stonebridge’s writing on the surrealistically-inclined and psychologically-underwritten subtexts of Moore’s wartime work.

Of the shift in meaning and purpose from the shelter drawings to the Madonna – “from moment to myth to monument” – Stonebridge writes:

Alone, the [Madonna] betrays little of its vertiginous facsimile origins, but is rather a monument to a fantasy about security and permanence (about the ‘enduringness of things’), as much art, perhaps, as reaction formation.”<sup>371</sup>

It is a reasoned and appropriate account of Moore’s realization of the work’s *raison d’être*, though one muddled by the suggestion of Moore’s lack of control. In Stonebridge’s reading, Moore’s integration of the historic with the contemporaneous is troubling, and “risks cancelling out historical experience at the precise moment it claims as its own.”<sup>372</sup> It is a reading predicated on renditions of Moore’s work that pander towards an intrinsic universality, namely David Sylvester’s, who Stonebridge quotes.

Moore’s metaphoric forms reveal marvellous and unsuspected likenesses between disparate things, but the revelation is like that of some elemental truth: once recognised, it seems inevitable... right and natural, reasonable, not outlandish and questionable.<sup>373</sup>

But Stonebridge’s is also a reading that appears to treat the contemporary as something other than subsequential, or composite.

Sylvester’s version of Moore, based on a close engagement with the artist as his secretary in the years after the war, was always equal parts complementary and strained, treating the artist with a regard that bordered on recalcitrance, on perhaps just over-familiarity. In an

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<sup>370</sup> Garlake, “Moore’s eclecticism”, p.174

<sup>371</sup> Stonebridge, “Bombs, Birth and Trauma”, p.110; quoting Keith Vaughan’s review of Moore’s shelter drawings. “I think these drawings are very moving because Moore has not withheld himself from the full impact of this strange and tragic situation, but going beyond the apparent, has tried to discover and express those human and enduring qualities which would simultaneously triumph and vindicate it... these motionless swathed figures belong to no-accidental setting of time and place. Rather, they are memorials to the enduringness of things, of stone, and human patience and courage.” Anon, “War Artists and the War”, *Penguin New Writing*, No.16, January 1943.

<sup>372</sup> Ibid, p.112

<sup>373</sup> David Sylvester, “Moore”, *About Modern Art: Critical Essays 1948-96* (Chatto and Windus, London, 1996), p. 189. The text is taken from the catalogue of Moore’s 1968 Tate exhibition.

unfair and incongruous comparison, the above salutation was marked by the proviso that “where Moore’s art is totally unlike Picasso’s is in its absence of wit, of the sharply incongruous image.”<sup>374</sup> Certainly, wit was seldom if ever part of Moore’s tool kit. But the levelling out of incongruous juxtapositions suggested by Stonebridge counters the second part of Sylvester’s criticism, and the apparent ‘permanence’ and ‘security’ of the work’ a mark of both the work’s materiality and three-dimensionality, and Moore’s fulfilment of the commission’s demands too. The ‘shifting back and forth’, as Russell put it, between referents made to “blend without incongruity” might then be rendered as the result of Moore’s close attention to the numerous form lessons he adopted.

Furthermore, to designate the ‘facsimile origins’ of Moore’s work as ‘vertiginous’, seemingly invoking the Bataillean conception of vertigo, or that which opposes or renounces the accepted order, is to render those ‘origins’ as inherently unstable, complex and aberrant.<sup>375</sup> Stonebridge’s identification of Moore’s disavowal of art’s capacity for “redemptive myth making” – the surrealist in him, though “marginal”, being ever present – is key to defining something of his artistic sensibility, but it fails to appreciate the significance of the equivocations in his work.

In an edited volume concerned with redefining the cultural significance of Western encounters with ‘primitivism’, the anthropologist Signe Howell’s essay on the instability of meaning across cultural boundaries takes Moore’s attention to the mother theme as an exemplar, and does so in opposition to the critic Peter Fuller’s treatment of the subject. Opening with Fuller’s pronouncements on the “relatively constant” facts of human experience, Howell questions his contention that Moore’s mothers affect a response in all men and women across cultural borders given their being “rooted in the imaginative and affective response to the mother’s body”.<sup>376</sup> Howell’s response is succinct and demonstrative, and speaks directly to, if not of, Moore’s Madonna, and its particular challenges.

Not all cultures perceive the relationship mother/child in the way we do in the west, where that particular relationship has received an enormous amount of cultural elaboration, largely shaped and legitimized by Christian dogma and the

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<sup>374</sup> Ibid, p.189

<sup>375</sup> The description is based on Bataille’s use of the word in his *Dictionnaire*, discussed with relation to surrealism in Yves-Alain Bois and Rosalind E. Krauss, *Formless: A User’s Guide*, exhibition (Centre Georges Pompidou, Paris, 1997) and Dawn Ades and Simon Baker (ed.), *Undercover Surrealism: Georges Bataille and Documents*, exhibition (Hayward Gallery, London, 2006)

<sup>376</sup> Signe Howell, “Art and Meaning”, in Susan Hiller, (ed.), *the Myth of Primitivism: Perspective on Art* (Routledge, London, 1991, repr, 1996), p.218

idealization of the Madonna/Child relationship, finding numerous expressions in the visual arts over many centuries.<sup>377</sup>

Howell's recognition of the unfixed cultural suggestiveness of Moore's thematic recourse is the obverse, I would suggest, of his stylistic dalliances: these ideas are self-supporting, even complementary. Howell goes on to elaborate upon this foundational premise with a discussion of the ways that what she terms 'social facts' – the trappings of existence and understanding – are constructed by, and defined within, contexts and cultures.

She groups the tangible products of a given society alongside their "indigenous psychological explanations" and so too the "body and its parts" all as 'social facts', and then she poses the following questions in order to disturb the idea of the fixity of such 'facts':

If inner states cannot be taken as trans-cultural, trans-historical categories, where does this leave the artist – or indeed anyone from the west confronting artefacts from other cultures? Must we all become anthropologists if we are to have the right to make use of such artefacts?<sup>378</sup>

Again, the impact of anthropological thinking had been central to the surrealist experiments in *Documents* and indeed throughout cultural practice in Western Europe in the early twentieth century.<sup>379</sup> But what particularly interests me when thinking about these responses to Moore's use of primitive influents is that Moore doesn't seem to ever have considered if he had the 'right to make use of artefacts', as his oscillatory formal engagements were the mark of an internationalist interest unmotivated by questions of nationalism. This might register the results not so much as appropriative, though they are certainly that in measure, but rather as stylistically heterogeneous, multifaceted, and transient, and capable of revealing more about the nature of artistic recourse to visual cultures in the early twentieth century than about the contents of the books consulted. Tracing Howell's line of enquiry into (and onto) works in the public domain and, in the case of this Madonna and Child, the sacred space of an Anglican church, moreover, allows the work to speak endlessly to its publics; of the changing nature of mother/child relations within and without cultural contexts, of cultural and of social difference, of the shape and form of bodily expression, and of history as process.

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<sup>377</sup> Ibid, pp.215-217

<sup>378</sup> Ibid, p. 224

<sup>379</sup> James Clifford, *The Predicament of Culture: Twentieth-Century Ethnography, Literature, and Art* (Harvard University Press, London, 1988)

Among Howell's responses to her own line of questioning, she suggests a number of potential responses. In proposing that forms readily open to interpretation – that display “some assumed universal aesthetic characteristics” – make possible a shared sense of empathy, potentially at a “deep, intuitive level”, she fittingly quotes Moore's feeling for sculpture's functionality.

All that is really needed is a response to the carvings themselves, which have a constant life of their own, independent of whenever and however they came to be made and as full of sculptural meaning today to those open and sensitive to perceive it as on the day they were finished.<sup>380</sup>

But with an eye to a more politically commensurate account of the way context shifts and relocates the meaning of things across borders, she proposes the following actions:

To regard the artefact as a found object to be used in the process of *bricolage*... it need be treated no differently from any other found object... there are no pretensions to pan-cultural significance – unless the artist specifically wishes to raise the problems involved in such an enterprise. At this point the object becomes a social fact and can be interpreted in the context of the culture of the western art discourse.<sup>381</sup>

As works of public art, this rendition seems entirely appropriate to the continued life force of an art work, and is in keeping with Moore's own belief in art's ability to speak for itself. It also helps to define something of the reason why art histories have tended towards open-ended accounts of the meaning of art produced in the post-war period, to be rendered as ahistorical and free from context in the ostensibly internationalised space of the gallery or art magazine.

But it also reduces their potential, excluding their insinuations, silencing their whispers or those references that might otherwise be recognised as what Gramsci defined an ‘inventory of traces’: the historical facts of being that public works demand to have recognised as a result of their inextricable relation to context.

Howell's argument is also the counter of the one I have put forward which is concerned as much with the pre-life of the works, so to speak, as with their afterlives. What interests me is the way Moore's grounding, and the background to these commissions made them eminently suited to conveying these ideas, making them legible, and conveying eloquently

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<sup>380</sup> Howell, “Art and Meaning”, pp.224-225; quoting Henry Moore, “Primitive Art”, pp.598-599

<sup>381</sup> Ibid, p.225



the nature of the cultural milieu that permitted them. The question of their subsequent transferability is a mark of their success.

What is important, and is worth returning to here, is Howell's identification of the influence of 'Christian dogma and the idealization of the Madonna/Child relationship' in the development of depictions of maternal relations in Western art history. With Moore's Madonna, this problem came to the fore, and read through its stylistic origins, almost seems to become the message. Moore's Madonna is about a much more pragmatic idea of motherhood, of growth, of reproduction and of evolution, than its status as a Madonna suggests.

When Niklaus Pevsner suggested that he believed Moore's Madonna was the 'acme of his work up-to-date', he acknowledged that it was a view that might be considered "conservative" by some critics.<sup>382</sup> In particular, he was referring to Herbert Read whose essay accompanied the publication of *Henry Moore: Sculpture and Drawings*, the book that Pevsner was reviewing. After suggesting that Read appeared "a little uncomfortable" with Moore's Madonna, he addressed Read's proclamation that "nothing, in the history of art, is so fatal as the representational fallacy" with uncertainty, and poked fun at Read's emphasis on the primary importance of applying "an aesthetic justification" to "every intellectual virtue or emotional tone".<sup>383</sup>

Pevsner defined his counter argument thus:

The truth, I submit, is that while the specific values of a piece of good sculpture are formal, i.e. measurable only by aesthetic criteria, a piece of good sculpture should have others besides its aesthetic values as well. If it has not, it will be pure, but it may easily be poor.<sup>384</sup>

In Moore's Madonna, Pevsner found an integration of associational and aesthetic qualities that resulted in a "fuller and more intense emotional pleasure than that attainable by aesthetic (or associational) values alone".<sup>385</sup> And in Moore's *Shelter Drawings* Pevsner found "a more direct and a more common emotional theme than in the previous works of

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<sup>382</sup> Pevsner, "Thoughts on Henry Moore", p.47. See p.66

<sup>383</sup> Ibid, p.47; quoting Herbert Read, "Introduction", 1944. In Read's biography of Moore from 1965 he repeated the argument, now with specific reference to the importance of Moore's drawings for Senate House as precedents, but still without purposeful reasoning.

<sup>384</sup> Ibid, p.48

<sup>385</sup> Ibid

the sculptor”, suggesting that the subject had “enabled him to touch cords which were bound to remain mute or muffled before.”<sup>386</sup>

Pevsner’s estimation that the results of Moore’s figurative turn outweighed the achievements of his abstractionist efforts and those made by his contemporaries is made convincingly, and his case for the Madonna’s gravitas reasoned, succinct, and untrammelled by attestations of the avant-garde.

As Pevsner describes, engaging directly with the publication of Herbert Read’s edited collection of Moore’s sculptures and drawings:

Looking back from the summit of the Northampton image at the course of Henry Moore’s development, one can see it clear and distinct, though with manifold windings and manifold reactions to varying circumstances... His personal idiom is ever perceptible, and it is one and the same however sensitively he may react to circumstances... It is an idiom wholly of nature but hardly anywhere fully of human nature, rarely beautiful but always significant. It is every inch sculptural and every inch sincere, the result evidently of concentrated feeling and of long and tenacious solitary thought.<sup>387</sup>

The catalogue was published the year that the Madonna was completed, and we might imagine it was compiled in tandem with Moore’s carving of the Madonna. It displays Moore’s diversity of output in outstanding detail, and in particular detail it illustrates the stages through which Moore completed the Madonna in his studio, laid out across a double page spread of the catalogue (fig.65). The 45 degree angle views of the Madonna from left or right help to give mass and meaning to the work, as it emerges from the block of Hornton stone.

And two pages later, in the same catalogue, a photograph of the finished work in situ is placed opposite an early nude sketch, *Drawing (from Life)* of 1928, as a brief chronological presentation of his drawings takes off where that of his sculptures concludes. The fifteen year time span between the two works is contracted, and a summation of his career to date is presented in compendium in this telling and evocative juxtaposition (Fig. 66).

More complete a record of Moore’s experiments and lessons learnt is presented in a series of photographs taken by Lee Miller upon visiting Moore’s studio in 1944 during the filming

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<sup>386</sup> Pevsner, “Thoughts on Henry Moore”, p.48

<sup>387</sup> Ibid, pp.47-48

of Jill Craigie's film *Out of Chaos* (figs.67 and 68). The photos present the Madonna and Child in the process of its carving.

Along with the stage lighting set up to capture Moore's studio with a suitable amount of drama can be seen the wide array of works that Moore spread about his studio, apparently as continued inspiration. Ranging from the twenties right through to the present, the diversity of his output is here for all to see: two masks from 1926 styled in response to the pre-Columbian sculptures at the British Museum and various figures and couples in varying levels of abstraction including a single *Figure* in Birds-eye marble from 1937, *Two Forms* sculpted in brown Hornton stone from 1934 and the 1935 *Family* in Elmwood (fig.69).<sup>388</sup> There are also two very different renditions of the maternal theme starkly different from the Madonna: the British Council's Ancaster stone *Mother and Child* from 1936 (fig.70) and the 1938 *Mother and Child* in Elmwood now in the MoMA collection (fig.71). To the sculptor's right hand side when faced with the Madonna's front, meanwhile, sit the life drawing of his wife seated nude from 1934 discussed with reference to his Senate House relief sketches and an early concrete bust (fig.72) that appears suddenly a significant referent for his Madonna's head.

This motley ensemble of works effortlessly represent the heterogeneity inherent in Moore's experimental approach, and Moore's surrounding himself with them suggests their significance as inspiration. Never better might the Madonna be understood than in the company she kept in her formative months, all Moore's own previous experiments, all the results of his lengthy investigation into form, all the results of his education.

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<sup>388</sup> LH69; LH181; LH166; LH161a

### **From the Village College to the Secondary Modern: Locating Moore's *Family Group***

In 1943, whilst still in the process of carving the Northampton *Madonna and Child*, Henry Moore began work on a series of drawings and maquettes on the theme of the Family Group. These studies were produced towards a large stone work intended to ornament the front of the Impington Village College, a progressive new school that had been built in Cambridgeshire before the war. That commission would ultimately remain unresolved, however. Instead, Moore's ideas came to fruition after the war in the form of a large scale sculpture for the Barclay School in Stevenage, one of the first purpose built secondary modern schools in the country.<sup>389</sup> It was to be Moore's first major bronze work.

But for the slight compositional variation – the addition of a father figure and occasionally a second child into the maternal pairing – Moore continued in these studies to explore the same formal concerns that had occupied him since the onset of war: the synthesis and imbrication of models of realism, surrealism, primitivism and classicism towards a figurative work that appeared accessible and comprehensible whilst retaining a radical undertow. The nature of their original commission, meanwhile, meant that these studies were also rooted in equivalent theoretical concerns to those discussed in the previous section of this thesis: that which Anne Garrould succinctly defined (in relation to his studies for Senate House) as Moore's characterization of "the ethics" of institutional education.<sup>390</sup>

But whereas Moore's engagement with the Senate House commission provided him with the occasion to elaborate, both visually and textually, on his conception of the mother and child's semiotic potential – to realign his favoured theme in a direction both personally and politically significant – the two commissions for which his Family Groups were conceptualised, and the works' measured forms, relate more directly and pointedly to a

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<sup>389</sup> Andrew Saint, *Towards a Social Architecture: The Role of School-Building in Post-War England* (Yale University Press, London, 1987), p.92

<sup>390</sup> HMF1424; see p.76

narrative about the changing shape and substance of scholastic provision in Britain as it existed in the years either side of the War.

In this section of the thesis I will retrace the background to each of these commissions as well as a third commission from 1945: a stone *Memorial Figure* for the Dartington Hall School, an experimental co-educational college in Devon, in order to locate these significant public works in the context of their conception. In doing so, I will explore the considered place of art, and particularly Moore's art – with all of its connotations and inferences – in relation to these three divergent but interrelated conceptualisations of educational provision devised in a period of about twenty years overlapping the Second World War, with each work considered as a proxy of sorts – with varying degrees of success and resonance – for the educational experiments they related to.

The schemes will be approached chronologically, chapter by chapter – Impington, Dartington, Barclay – in order to trace the development of Moore's practice from pre- to post-war in tandem with the educational developments that will be shown to have directed Moore's output, and through which we are able to re-examine his evolving practice and means of production.

This period saw a fundamental overhaul in the structures of education in Britain, and the figures that commissioned these works and who helped to define Moore's practice as it was reoriented were all centrally involved in the dialogues that preceded and helped to implement developments both theoretical and structural in the fabric of British education. Furthermore, Moore's involvement went beyond his role as the sculptor of monuments tied up with the language of pedagogical reform. His involvement on committees charged with positing and providing the ideas and the means towards educational and cultural empowerment, continuous with his politics and his experiences discussed previously, is central to my reading of his artistic ambitions, and will be embedded in my reading of these three commissions.

Chapter five will present the background to Moore's turn to the family theme with a reading of the significance of the Impington Village College which had inspired it, and the extent of Moore's engagement with the project. The school was designed by Walter Gropius and Maxwell Fry, both significant figures in the pre-war avant-garde and acquaintances of Moore. That context will be the grounding for this discussion, as I explore Moore's attention to the purpose of this public commission in distinction from his approach to more personal works.

Chapter six then looks at Moore's relationship with Dorothy and Leonard Elmhirst, two highly influential patrons of modern art and campaigners for social and cultural reform in Britain, in order to assess Moore's involvement with two interrelated projects: the commission of a work for the Dartington School which the Elmhirsts had set up in the '20s as an 'experiment in rural education', and Moore's involvement on the committee of the Visual Arts panel of the *Arts Enquiry*, a survey set up by Leonard Elmhirst in 1941 to assess the state of the visual arts in Britain.

The reclining figure Moore produced to sit in the landscape overlooking the school was commissioned to remember the former administrator of both the school's arts department and the *Arts Enquiry*, Christopher Martin, who had passed away in the final months of war. As such, it must be conceived, first, as a memorial work, as the name suggests. But a memorial to what? The man, the moment, or the ideology manifest in the efforts of Martin and the Elmhirsts? As such, I will also approach the work in relation to both the thinking behind the school and the broader discussions concerning cultural enfranchisement epitomised by the ambitions of the *Arts Enquiry* in order to account for this work's possible meanings.

Finally, chapter seven concludes the thesis with a reading of the suitability of the *Family Group's* resolution in the grounds of the Barclay School; an early example of post-war school building, and in the country's first New Town, Stevenage. This will be presented through its relation to the implementation of educational reform after the 1944 Education Act, and the ways in which the scheme in Hertfordshire of which it was part built upon pre-war educational theory and artistic practice. The thematic suitability of the family will then be read in respect of its place in the language of social reform in the post-war period: the embryonic welfare state.

That the family came to represent such an important part in the constitution of the post-war social order has been identified as a fundamental mark of the shift in social formulation from pre-to post-war. But tracing the history of Moore's work on the theme across the divide of war suggests approaches to understanding the development of thinking about reconstruction – including the place of the family and of the role of community in society – from its roots in the pre-war period.

The reconciliation of the individual freedoms inherent in democratic society with the state's implementation of measures to protect and provide for the well-being of everyone on equal terms was a central feature of the incipient Welfare State, legislated for in the post-

war period. That Moore's work apparently represented these ideas so effortlessly is the question which underscores much of what follows.

But as well suited and resonant as Moore's Family might appear in the context of the post-war period, its origins lay earlier, and in a different context: one that preceded Moore's position as a 'figurehead', and in which enunciations of the *avant-garde's* role were on a different political register. That is where the discussion must start.

## 5. 'A new institution, single but many-sided': The Impington Village College

The school at Impington was the fourth of a series of 'village colleges' built under the watch of Cambridgeshire's Chief Education Officer, Henry Morris.<sup>391</sup> Morris had conceived of the village college model as an answer to the problem of education and community in villages, ideas he first presented in a hugely influential pamphlet of 1923 known simply as his *Memorandum*.<sup>392</sup> The idea was to create a space for both vocational and academic training, for infant childcare, adult evening classes, community events and social occasions: a focal point for the entire community.<sup>393</sup>

Having trialled his ideas with three other village schools in the vicinity of Cambridge, Impington was the first in which Morris' progressive theoretical scheme was matched with a progressive architectural equivalent. It was designed by Walter Gropius and Maxwell Fry during Gropius' brief time in Britain in the mid-'30s having fled Nazi Germany, and remains the most complete realisation of Morris' ambitions, and a flag-bearer for what would become recognisable as post-war school design (fig.73).<sup>394</sup> Indeed, in Herbert Read's treatise on the place of art in education from 1943, he held up Gropius and Fry's scheme as a model for the "essentials of an educational

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<sup>391</sup> Tony Jeffs, *Henry Morris: Village Colleges, Community Education and the Ideal Order* (Educational Heretics Press, Nottingham, 1998), pp.41-67

<sup>392</sup> Henry Morris, *The Village College. Being a Memorandum on the Provision of Educations and Social Facilities for the Countryside, with Special Reference to Cambridgeshire* (Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 1925); republished in Harry Rée, *The Henry Morris Collection* (Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 1984), pp.

<sup>393</sup> Caitlin Adams, "Rural education and reform between the wars" in Paul Brassley, Jeremy Burchardt and Lynne Thompson (ed.), *The English Countryside Between the Wars: Regeneration or Decline* (Boydell Press, Woodbridge, 2006), pp.36-52

<sup>394</sup> Niklaus Pevsner, (ed.), *Cambridgeshire: The Buildings of England Series* (Penguin, Harmondsworth, 1970), pp.412-413.

The first three village colleges, in order, were in the villages of Sawston (1930), Linton, and Bottisham (both 1937), the middle of which also had a Bauhaus intervention in the form of a colour scheme designed by Moholy-Nagy. Harry Rée, *Educator Extraordinary: The Life and Achievement of Henry Morris 1889-1961* (Peter Owen, London, 1985), pp.67-72.



environment”, arguing that “[n]othing in this plan is extravagant or luxurious: everything is natural, functional and practical”.<sup>395</sup> It was a description well suited to reflect many of the ambitions of the post-war school building programme that came in its wake.<sup>396</sup> Indeed, in his influential study of the significance of school building projects in post-war Britain, Andrew Saint wrote that Impington was:

[T]he fullest expression of the movement for a social architecture which gathered pace in the 1930s and found its outlet in the service of the post-war welfare state. No more ambitious, discipline, self-conscious or far-reaching application of the concept of architecture as social service can be found in any western country.<sup>397</sup>

This veneration provides a suitable point of departure in the following consideration of the origins of Moore’s work and its significance.

As was the case with the Senate House drawings, it is difficult to date precisely both Moore’s first artistic engagement with the Impington project and Morris’ identification of Moore as a suitable commissionee. What we know is that Morris first met Gropius in 1934, that the school was designed in the following year, and that it was eventually completed after much financial wrangling in 1939 just before the outbreak of war.<sup>398</sup> Moore’s first drawings completed directly towards the commission were seemingly produced around the end of 1943, once Morris felt comfortable he could raise the money needed, and ten years after the project’s initiation. By that point, the school had been standing for almost five years (though little used as a result of war), Gropius had departed for the States to take up a position as the chair of the Department of Architecture at Harvard, and Fry, having written up and published the Modern Architectural Research Group (MARS)’s plans for a post-war redevelopment of London, was engaged with writing a book on the subject whilst serving with the Royal Engineers.<sup>399</sup>

The time discrepancy dislocates Moore’s work on the plans from the immediate context in which the school was formulated, and instead positions them in relation to his wartime work on the London Underground and the Madonna. The result is that these works appear

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<sup>395</sup> Read, *Education Through Art*, pp.299-301

<sup>396</sup> See the first chapter of Saint, *Towards a Social Architecture*, pp.1-16.

<sup>397</sup> Saint, *Towards a Social Architecture*, p.ix

<sup>398</sup> Correspondence between Henry Morris and Walter Gropius, 17<sup>th</sup> – 26<sup>th</sup> November 1934, Gropius Correspondence file II-571, Bauhaus-Archiv, Berlin; Rée, *Educator Extraordinary*, pp.70-72; *Original Papers of Henry Morris* (C73/1503-1529), Cambridgeshire County Council Archives.

<sup>399</sup> Fry was also a founder member of P.E.P. before the war, and discussed M.A.R.S.’ work with relation to both Impington and P.E.P. in his book: Fry, *Fine Building*. See also Korn, Fry and Sharp, “The M.A.R.S. Plan for London”, pp.163-173 and Siegfried Giedion, *Walter Gropius: Work and Teamwork* (The Architectural Press, London, 1954)

to occupy the same conceptual space as their immediate predecessors, with the formal equivalences likely a significant aspect of Moore's thinking. But as I will argue, it is through Moore's close association with the circles of influence that bought the commissions of both the school and the potential sculpture to bear that we might best understand his development of the theme, which in turn might recast his work from the early years of war further still.

The first sign of Moore's knowledge of the school comes in a letter he wrote to Gropius from early 1937 to congratulate him on his appointment at Harvard, Moore wrote: "From when I first heard that you had come to England I myself hoped that you would remain here permanently; but since knowing you I feel doubly sorry that you are leaving us", before concluding with a P.S.: "May I come again sometime to your office to look at the perspective sketch of the Village College?"<sup>400</sup>

Were he not yet aware of any potential commission, certainly Moore harboured an interest in the project that, at the very least, displayed an engagement with pedagogical advancement and with Gropius's architectural work at the end of the '30s that must inflect his subsequent work on the commission. But so should a more pragmatic point of discussion: their living circumstances. Both lived in Hampstead just streets from one another, the focal point for both British and émigré avant-garde artists, designers and thinkers at that time. Roger Berthoud has written that "at no other time in recent history have foreign affairs and Britain's intellectual life been so closely intermeshed as in the last three years of the thirties."<sup>401</sup> Certainly Moore's involvement in the 'intellectual life' of London took a decidedly political turn around this time. He took his place amongst the politically active elements of a British intelligentsia and a British arts scene squarely hostile to fascism in all its forms, leading to an abortive attempt on Moore's part to join an artist's delegation to Spain in support of the Republican cause in 1937, for which he also signed and designed a pamphlet entitled 'We Ask Your Attention' which accompanied an exhibition organised by the Artists International Association (AIA).<sup>402</sup> But if shared antipathy towards fascism was the most pronounced aspect of the Hampstead set's shared sensitivities, then their mutual desire to discuss and propose reform in both theoretical and physical forms was a mark of their belief in another way.

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<sup>400</sup> Letter from Henry Moore to Walter Gropius, January 30<sup>th</sup> 1937, Gropius Correspondence file GS19-793, Bauhaus-Archiv, Berlin.

<sup>401</sup> Berthoud, *The Life of Henry Moore*, p.154

<sup>402</sup> Ibid, p.157

It was in direct relation to Morris' ideas about education that the family theme was felt suitable, as Moore later recalled:

Instead of just building a school, [Morris] was going to make a centre for the whole life of the surrounding villages, and we hit upon this idea of the family being the unit we were aiming at. He at first fired me by the idea... that there should be places for concerts, for music [in the school] – that the whole of the arts should be integrated into life.<sup>403</sup>

It was a conception of thematic purposivity more pointed than his earlier reinterpretation of the mother and child trope, and one which stood out from the wider art historical lineage into which his Madonna had so easily fit. The works, though reminiscent of and related to his earlier experiments, appeared new, with few immediate precedents in the history of sculpture. I will locate this thematic departure in close relation to the context in which these works were formulated.

Moore and Morris' conception of the family group's meaning was, at root, metaphoric, and stood in for a comment on community that, whilst being eminently appropriate, was also tied up with the language of progressive social reform in the late '30s, of which pedagogical reform was an important constituent part. And though it would be disingenuous to inflect Morris's designs with too political a bent, his own politics being far from clear or uniform, and his proposals pragmatic more than anything else, such an emphasis on community has close affinities with both anarchist- and socialist-inclined conceptions of localism, collaboration and collectivism which underscored broader plans for the reorganisation of society, and the place of education therein, both before and during the war.<sup>404</sup> Indeed, such political overtones and inflections in the Impington scheme were further delineated from the moment Morris was partnered with Gropius through the efforts of their mutual friend, Jack Pritchard, a central figure of the Hampstead set. A former student of Morris's at Cambridge in the '20s, Pritchard had been pivotal – along with Fry – in bringing Gropius to England, and had introduced Moore to both Gropius and Morris at his Lawn Road Flats, designed by Wells Coates and a focal point for the Hampstead community.<sup>405</sup>

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<sup>403</sup> Transcript of Moore's statement on Morris for "Farewell Night, Welcome Day", BBC radio broadcast, 4 January 1963, quoted in Wilkinson, *Henry Moore: Writings and Conversations*, p.89

<sup>404</sup> As Tony Jeffs wrote in an examination of Morris' achievements and legacy, "By the 1920s Morris was describing himself as a Socialist but it was a somewhat idiosyncratic self-wrought variety. Albeit at times close to the Labour Party, the suspicion lingers that contacts were made and proximity sought for pragmatic rather than ideological reasons." Jeffs, *Henry Morris*, p. 9

<sup>405</sup> The area around Pritchard's Lawn Road Flats and Moore's studio on Parkhill Road has been described as "that English Bateau-Lavoir" by Jean Hélion after the Parisian artistic community in Montmartre at the start of

Gropius outlined his conception of the “societal properties of architecture” in a publication of 1925, translated into English shortly after his arrival in Britain as *The New Architecture and the Bauhaus*.<sup>406</sup> In the introduction to the translation, the noted administrator of the Council for Art and Industry, Frank Pick, also identified the line of correlation between Gropius’ ideas and those of William Morris and John Ruskin when he wrote of the book’s value in reconnecting architecture with everyday design, and the potentially “redemptive” power of design.<sup>407</sup> Gropius developed these broad ideas in a more pointed direction with the 1937 essay “Art Education and State” – published in *Circle* in the process of Impington’s construction – in which he succinctly enunciated the terms by which the state should be involved in the development of a social architecture, and through which he believed they could “benevolently” support the artist.<sup>408</sup> Underpinning these points is a fundamental belief in the important role that art could and should play in education, as well as vice versa.<sup>409</sup>

Maxwell Fry’s described his understanding of the place of the new school and of the education represented by the Village College for the life of its community thus:

Somewhere in the structure of new town building the community centre has a part to play, and that part I think lies before school begins and after schools ends, midway between the household life of the family and the corporate government of the district. It is the district university and the district club, the instruments with which the broken ends of urban life can be made continuous, and education comes into its own.<sup>410</sup>

Here we might find a broader pronouncement of the sense of community that was conceived to be at the centre of social reform, and to which Moore’s family might have

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the century. As well as Gropius and Wells Coates himself, Marcel Breuer and László Moholy-Nagy would also live at the Lawn Road flats and the Isokon restaurant there became a regular haunt from 1937. Harrison, *English Art and Modernism*, p.276

Moore later recalled: “I first met Henry Morris, I think at Jack Pritchard’s Lawn Road flats in Hampstead, when Gropius because of Hitler left Germany, I suppose around 1933. Henry Morris later on asked Gropius to design Impington Village College, and it was then that Henry Morris approached me about a piece of sculpture.”

Moore’s “Farewell Night, Welcome Day”, quoted in Wilkinson, *Henry Moore: Writings and Conversations*, p.89

<sup>406</sup> Gropius, *The New Architecture and the Bauhaus* (Faber, London, 1935); Marc Armitage, “The Influence of School Architecture and Design on the Outdoor Play Experience within the Primary School”, *Paedagogica Historica. International Journal of the History of Education*, Vol. 41, No. 4/5, August 2005, pp.535-553

<sup>407</sup> Ibid; Ian Grosvenor, “The Art of Seeing’: Promoting Design in Education in 1930s Britain”, *Paedagogica Historica. International Journal of the History of Education*, Vol. 41, No. 4/5, August 2005, pp.507-534

<sup>408</sup> Walter Gropius, “Art Education and the State”, in *Circle*, pp.238-242

<sup>409</sup> Leah Dickermann has pointed out that: “Although the Bauhaus was ultimately many things – publisher, advertising agency, industrial-design partner, fabricator – it was first and foremost a school, and its approach to modernism was defined pedagogically.” Leah Dickerman, “Bauhaus Fundamentals”, *Bauhaus 1919-1933: Workshops for Modernity*, exhibition (Museum of Modern Art, New York, 2009), p.15

<sup>410</sup> Maxwell Fry, *Fine Building*, p.79

been intended to speak. Returning to Moore's interest in seeing Gropius' plans for Impington, we might potentially find there Moore's conception of the need to produce a work in response to, and with an appreciation for, the architectural design for which it was proposed. Both insinuations help to define Moore's grasp of the requirements of public art, to be registered as his appreciation of the relationship between form and function so central to the architectural design of the school. So let us return to the question of function.

Should Moore have been aware of this potential commission before the onset of war, it is likely he had it at least half in mind whilst working on the Senate House drawings, and that the two commissions might sit in close proximity. The family theme then appears an inevitable development upon his earlier work, and one that relates something of his feeling of the difference between these commissions, to be traced onto his *Shelter Drawings* and his *Madonna*, whilst linking these projects theoretically to a broader modernist project. I will pursue this idea in conclusion. Let us first examine the facts.

In a letter to Dorothy Miller, the director of painting and sculpture at the Museum of Modern Art, from 1951, Moore described the conception of the work thus.

Gropius asked me to do a piece of sculpture for the school. We talked about it and I suggested that a family group would be the right subject. However, it never got further than that because there was no money. Henry Morris tried unsuccessfully to raise money by private subscription. Gropius left England for Harvard University. Later the war came and I heard no more about it until about 1944, Henry Morris told me that he now thought he could get enough money together for the sculpture if I would still think of doing it. I said yes, because the idea right from the start had appealed to me and I began drawings in note book form of family groups. From these note book drawings I made a number of small maquettes, a dozen or more... Some of the maquettes were ideas for bronze, but most of them were for stone because for the Impington school I felt stone would be the suitable material.<sup>411</sup>

The suggestion that it was Gropius who had asked him to complete the sculpture is a tantalising one – though one without corroboration – for there is a different scale of significance between an educationalist desiring a sculpture and an architect of Gropius' inclination including it in his designs, even if only at a conceptual level.<sup>412</sup> Certainly, we

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<sup>411</sup> Letter from Henry Moore to Dorothy Miller, curator at Museum of Modern Art New York, 31<sup>st</sup> January 1951, MoMA Archives; reprinted in James (ed.), *Henry Moore on Sculpture*, pp.224-225.

<sup>412</sup> One feels that Moore's recollection of the sequencing of events must be broadly right given the significance of the question he was responding to – Miller was establishing the provenance of MOMA's copy of the Barclay

know that Morris felt particularly attached to the scheme, and was said to be very disappointed when the work was ultimately realised at the Barclay School. It is also clear from Fry's description on the school in 1944 that the relation of the school to its inhabitants was central to his and Gropius' thinking.

By day the college is a school. But no gates close when school is over, for then its evening life begins: a life of older brothers and sisters and fathers and mothers who continue their education on terms of a maturer experience. There is no ending, no sudden break.<sup>413</sup>

This enunciation of the collective involvement of all members of the family appears the most telling identification of the 'family' Moore was gesturing towards.

Morris' conceptualisation of the Village College was first published as his *Memorandum on the Provision of Educations and Social Facilities for the Countryside* in 1925.<sup>414</sup> Having opened with an identification that the majority of developments in state education in the previous fifty years had been urban ones, Morris outlined his plans for the

grouping and co-ordination of all the educational and social agencies which now exist in isolation in the countryside: an amalgamation which, while preserving the individuality and function of each, will assemble them into a whole and make possible their expression for the first time in a new institution, single but many-sided.<sup>415</sup>

It was a plan recognisant of the inferiority of the economic position of the countryside, as well as the ever-growing proportion of the population that lived in urban centres, but which sought to provide an alternative pertinent to rural life, and that was purposefully contrary to the erstwhile shape of an urban-centric educational programme.

The need of the countryside will not be met until, by a recasting of the rural elementary school system, the villages are provided with an education primary and secondary which will fit boys and girls for life (in its widest sense) as countrymen and countrywomen; until the countryside is provided with an institution in which the wide provisions of the great consolidated Education Act of 1921, especially in

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sculpture, produced subsequently to help finance the original commission – and given the date of the request, whilst Moore was still at work on the Family theme towards a later *Family Group* for the New Town of Harlow.

<sup>413</sup> Maxwell Fry, *Fine Building*, p.77. Morris's disappointment that John Newsom came to commission the work he had desired for Impington resulted in Moore giving him one of the editioned maquettes produced subsequently. Tony Jeffs, *Henry Morris*, p.59

<sup>414</sup> Henry Morris, *The Village College*

<sup>415</sup> Réé, *Educator Extraordinary*, p.144-157; quoting *Times Educational Supplement*, Dec 13<sup>th</sup> 1942

regard to higher and technical education, can be expressed in terms of rural life and industry; until the population of the countryside has guaranteed to it a social and recreational life based on stable foundations.<sup>416</sup>

That the direction of his thought was purposefully registered in opposition to the urbanisation of life that had marked social shifts in Britain since the Industrial Revolution appears to mark the scheme as somehow backward, retrogressive, and in opposition to the headlong march of modernisation.

Moreover, it might ask to be read in tandem with the contemporaneous calls for decentralisation in response to the totalitarian interpretations of collectivism from both the right and left wings of Europe that were so readily presented as the fundamental threats to British democracy and liberty. Of particular significance here might be the anarchist rhetoric of a figure like Herbert Read, an educational theorist and self-defined democrat who espoused a turn away from big-state politics towards a localised politics based around “mutual support and liberty” begat from the ideas of Peter Kropotkin whose collected writings Read edited during wartime, and whose pronouncements on an ideal society frequently revolve around an archaic “village community” that had long since ceased to exist.<sup>417</sup>

That was not Morris’s intention. As Tony Jeffs has written, Morris was “by nature and training... a centralizer”; his plans were directly related to and shaped in response to state educational provision as it existed in the 1920s. Morris’s village was not intended as the sort of autonomous enclave so eulogised by Read but, identified as part of an expansive and inclusive rural region, was expected to become a “cultural and social unit, parallel to that of the town.”<sup>418</sup> And not only that, for Morris’s vision contained a reconceptualization of educational potentiality that was far-reaching in its ambitions:

Our state educational institutions are classroom-ridden lesson ridden, text-book ridden, given over to incessant didactic discourse and discursiveness. They lack ritual and rhythm and that kind of corporate ceremony in which the personality even of the young is freed and enhanced by the profoundly affecting dramatic combination of architecture, music, literature and movement.

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<sup>416</sup> Ibid, p.144-145

<sup>417</sup> See in particular Read, *Kropotkin – Selected Writings*, pp.46-48 on free cities, mutual aid and medieval guilds.

<sup>418</sup> Henry Morris, “Rural Civilization”, a paper delivered to the British Association, Blackpool, 15<sup>th</sup> September 1936. Original papers of Henry Morris, Cambridgeshire County Council Archives: C73/1503-1529

That from a paper delivered to the British Association in 1936. He continued, more presciently still:

I hope I shall not be met with the prevaricating and frivolous query “Can we afford all this?” Apart from the fact that our contemporary civilization is a prodigal misuse and waste of human and economic resources and ignoring the blindness that does not see that health and education are the chief instruments of racial preservation, there is the new fact that social services and social reconstruction on a vast scale are the only ways we can hope to use the practically limitless increment of wealth that science and technology have potentially endowed us. We must rid ourselves of the infirmity of economy, and prepare ourselves boldly for an era, indefinitely long, of unremitting social reconstruction.<sup>419</sup>

Morris’s recognition of not only the need for vast social reconstruction, but its inevitability too, sits quite comfortably alongside the attestations of the circles through which Morris came to meet Gropius; the progressive avant-garde who started planning for reconstruction long before the war created a literal space into which their ideas could be implemented. Indeed, Gropius’ pioneering role in the development of the Bauhaus was, from the start, underwritten by an equivalent conception of the need for, and indeed the inevitability of social reform, and the place of the artist therein.

Succinctly defining the impetus behind the Bauhaus, Leah Dickerman wrote:

the school’s most significant achievement may be its nurturing of a sustained cross-media conversation about the nature of art in the modern age: over the course of fourteen years... the Bauhaus brought together artists, architects and designers in a kind of cultural think tank for the times... This purposeful diversity, present from the start, provoked a reimagining of the relation between fine art and design that offered a formidable challenge to the distinctions between them.<sup>420</sup>

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<sup>419</sup> Ibid. There is an interesting parallel between the process by which Morris achieved his ambitions for the village colleges through private finance and the way his attestations of the need to look beyond the affordability of reform came to bear in the post-war period with the support of the Marshall Plan, as an indirect result of which the physical reconstruction of the British educational system was made possible. Significantly, the largest donation Morris received for his ideas came from the Spelman Fund, an American philanthropic organisation set up with Rockefeller’s Standard Oil money in the ‘20s that supported John D. Rockefeller Sr.’s “favourite personal causes”, namely the social sciences and “wider concerns centered on the welfare of women and children” which proved an important sponsor of Roosevelt’s New Deal in the 30s. Patrick D. Reagan, *Designing a New America: The Origins of a New Deal Planning 1890-1943* (University of Massachusetts Press, Amherst, 2000), pp.140-148. With Rockefeller money having supported the construction of both Holden’s University of London buildings and Morris’ Village Colleges in the pre-war period (see p.85n194) it appears noteworthy that Moore’s *Family Group* should have entered the collection of Nelson Rockefeller in the years after the war.

<sup>420</sup> Leah Dickerman, “Bauhaus Fundamentals”, p.15



This direction of thought continued a tradition inherited from William Morris concerned with the integration of the arts and crafts into the daily life of society, towards a future underwritten by cooperation and equality.<sup>421</sup> In Gropius and Morris's shared belief in the role of the state in providing the means to equality of opportunity and distribution of wealth, enunciated so deliberately and passionately by Morris above, we might find a ready analogue for the development of educational provision in the subsequent decades.<sup>422</sup>

Both structurally and theoretically, Morris's plan was prescient in its identification of the range of needs in and outside of an urban-centric notion of scholastic provision. It was this direction of thinking that the subsequent Education Act of 1944 was intended to address as it differentiated between children's needs and their skills, though that system would be unfavourably anchored around notions of perceived ability rather than geographical locale, pragmatism or an appreciation of the breadth of socio-cultural conditions that precede one's schooling and the definition of one's ability. The 1944 Act will be discussed further in chapter seven.

Of the situation preceding the implementation of the 1944 Act, the General Secretary of the Workers Education Association, Ernest Green, wrote:

English education reflects strikingly the society of which it is a part. The same contrasts between wealth and poverty are well represented by the expenditure on the children of Boston, Lincs., or Falmouth, whose schooling cost £9 6s. 2d. a year, and those at Eton on whom at least £315 – generally much more – is lavished annually. There are the same extremes of comfort, as seen in the comparison between all that modern planning can provide in a Cambridgeshire village college or in the latest secondary school, and the slum elementary schools which are the dismal relics of Victorianism.<sup>423</sup>

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<sup>421</sup> See Reyner Banham, "The Bauhaus", *Theory and Design in the First Machine Age* (MIT Press, Boston, 1980), pp.276-304

<sup>422</sup> The year before Morris published his memorandum, the economic historian R.H. Tawney had published an important treatise on the need for universal educational access, *Secondary Education For All – A Policy for Labour* which informed the Labour Party's policy making and which in turn influenced the governmental Hadow Reports of 1926 and 1931 entitled *The Education of the Adolescent* and *The Primary School* which together presented the need for educational reform and made a number of suggestions concerning suitable structures for a more purposeful education system.

Moore later got to know Tawney through their mutual involvement on the executive committee of the short lived anti-fascist movement named *For Intellectual Liberty* which included among its number Leonard Woolf, E.M. Forster, Aldous Huxley and J.D. Bernal, the last two of whom would also be included in *Circle*. Overy, *The Morbid Age*, pp.300-301

<sup>423</sup> Green, *Education for a New Society*, p.27; referencing Leybourne and White, *Education and the Birth Rate* (Jonathan Cape, London, 1940)

Morris's scheme, and particularly Gropius and Fry's response to it, spoke loudly and candidly of the interplay between British pastoralism and modernity as a necessary fact of British life in the 1920s and '30: the negotiation of a 'British tradition' with the trappings of contemporary technology and possibility, but on a necessarily small scale. With Impington, they defined a shape for countryside community schooling complete with all the trappings of both: agricultural and domestic science labs, a community library, billiard tables and darts boards, and an assembly hall fitted with the technology to project films for both educational and entertainment purposes.<sup>424</sup> But for all of the attestations of its revolutionary character, the progressive rhetoric behind it remained anomalous, and would only be truly taken up much later. Rather than tracing Morris' experiments backwards as did Read, Andrew Saint drew attention to the extent of the village college scheme's radicalism when he described it as "the most prophetic expression of what 'community school' might mean", prefiguring the community college movement of the 1960s and '70s by some decades.<sup>425</sup>

To compare Morris's demands with Gropius' architectural ambitions locates the suitability of the German architect who had written in *The New Architecture and the Bauhaus* of his desire for a structurally rational approach to architecture underpinned by an appreciation for the "aesthetic satisfaction of the human soul".<sup>426</sup> This synthesis is best expressed in Gropius' ambition for the integration of nature into the "stony deserts of our great towns", and his identification of the narrowing distinctions between town and country:

The demand for more spacious, and above all greener and sunnier, cities has now become insistent. Its corollary is the separation of residential from industrial and commercial districts by the provision of properly coordinated transport services. Thus the goal of the modern town planner should be to bring town and country into closer and closer relationship.<sup>427</sup>

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<sup>424</sup> Jeffs, *Henry Morris*, p.46

<sup>425</sup> Saint, *Towards a Social Architecture*, p.41. "Had it not been for this single pioneer... post-war architects would have lacked almost any home-grown guidance when state secondary schools at length reached the age of maturity in the 1960s... The origins and shape of the integrated community comprehensive schools of the 1960s and '70s as well as the colleges at the University of York, both owe much to Morris' refusal to accept the conventional barriers... between learning and living, and to his insistence that architects and educators should collaborate in pursuit of the same civilized ideals." With relation to the context of Morris' educational proposals, Saint suggests that Morris "was at his zenith at a time when few public educators grasped what he stood for", and that his progressive plans had more in common with the educational practices in liberal public schools such as Bedales, Bryanston and Dartington than anything in the state system

<sup>426</sup> Gropius, *The New Architecture and the Bauhaus*, p.24

<sup>427</sup> Ibid, p.100

That Morris was able to propose community centres for extended village communities was predicated on an idea of their shared communality based on proximity, similar in conception to Gropius' goals and implicitly underscored by the increased presence of automobiles in daily life. And in the opposite direction, to notice that Gropius and Fry's design was characterised by load-bearing brick rather than the concrete and steel that Gropius spent most of his publication advocating suggests their appreciation for the relation of Morris's scheme to a non-urban setting: their synthesis of modern form and ideas with the practicalities of intended function, not to mention the financial practicalities inherent in public buildings projects in England before the war.<sup>428</sup> In both aspects, the question of the school's donors and their wishes for it must also come into play, with the majority of the funding for the school provided by the local council and the government.<sup>429</sup>

Gropius' outlined his views on the role of the state in educational planning in his essay for *Circle*, "Art Education and State".

What can the State do independently of private initiative to bring the artist into closer contact with the life of the whole population, particularly with the practical industry?... It must exercise the greatest circumspection if it is to prove of assistance in achieving the goal...

Art needs no tutelage; it must be able to develop in complete freedom... the very most that the State and public authorities can do is to concur intelligently in the initiative which comes from the artists themselves, by supporting, benevolently and wholeheartedly, every attempt to stimulate industry and the public, and especially exhibitions.<sup>430</sup>

His argument hangs around a belief in both the fundamental importance of art and design in society and the appropriate means of utilising progressive design in the reorientation of society. But like Fry, he recognised the need to establish a contract between the state and its constituents in order to facilitate democratic progress. Again, this is not a levelling out of

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<sup>428</sup> Alan Powers, *Britain* (Modern Architectures in History Series, Reaktion Books, London, 2007), p.45

<sup>429</sup> The Board of Education were committed to providing 50% of the cost of buildings for elementary and higher education at this time, but nothing for public health, adult education or recreation. In the end, well over a third of the costs of the building (£124,020) were provided independent of government by the Spelman Fund (£45,000), the Elmhursts (£1,000), the Buxton Trust (£220) and the Trigg Foundation (£858). The government grant was for £39,481 and the Cambridgeshire Council had to provide just £37,481 which appears to have encouraged them to accept the project more readily. DJ Farnell, unpublished associated diploma thesis, *Henry Morris – An Architect of Education*, Cambridge Institute of Education, 1968, p.34

<sup>430</sup> Gropius, "Art Education and State", p.239

society but rather Gropius' recognition of the need to support those with advanced skills to allow them to contribute meaningfully.

But rather than simply tracing a straight line between content and form, Gropius suggests that

Form is not a product of the intellect, but of human desire, and is therefore closely associated with the individual, with the nation and with place and time.<sup>431</sup>

It was that exactitude of place and time, Gropius suggests - for the 'technical age in which we are living' – that dictated the need to tread so carefully and to work towards a compromise between intellect and desire, between control and freedom, and between social-provision and self-expression that would "fuse art with technique, and reintegrate the artists into the daily work of the nation".<sup>432</sup> Gropius suggestions prefigured the developments in public art that would be made in the aftermath of the war.

Moore's passage in *Circle* appears harmonious with Gropius's. Through reproduced in abbreviation from his longer pronouncements on art published in Unit One three years earlier, the short passage printed appears purposefully chosen, though whether by the artist or editors remains unclear. The first of just two bullet points published reads:

I dislike the idea that contemporary art is an escape from life. Because a work does not aim at reproducing the natural appearance it is not therefore an escape from life – it may be a penetration into reality; not a sedative or drug, not just the exercise of good taste, the provision of pleasant shapes and colours in a pleasing combination, not a decoration to life – but an expression of the significance of life, a stimulation to greater effort in living.<sup>433</sup>

As discussed previously, Charles Harrison undermined the broad ambitions of *Circle* as an idealistic attempt to experience the "spiritual and intellectual excitement of revolution... through art, architecture and design, [but] without the historical actuality."<sup>434</sup> To a degree his critique is fair, but only so far as one side of the publication is concerned, for a feature of *Circle's* usefulness now is its demonstration of the extent to which its contributors disagreed, presenting varying shades of the cultural-political opinions of its members.<sup>435</sup> In

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<sup>431</sup> Ibid, p.238

<sup>432</sup> Ibid p.238

<sup>433</sup> Moore, "Quotations" in *Circle*, p.118

<sup>434</sup> Harrison, *English Art and Modernism*, p.287; see p.107

<sup>435</sup> Lewison has identified the purposeful employment of the term 'constructive' in the journal's subtitle so as to "embrace a wide cross-section of artists, architects and writers who might not have been included under a

Moore's and Gropius' deliberate expression of the relation between the artist and their context, and between their autonomy and the socio-political support which might promote such freedoms can be found their appreciation of this contradiction and their attempts to think through it. Gropius displayed that appreciation throughout his working life, and similarly, in Moore's theoretical and formal designs for the Impington commission can be located his conception of appropriate form, and his expression of that which he termed "the significance of life", which he intended as a "stimulation to a greater effort in living".

The earliest of Moore's drawings potentially penned with the commission in mind were produced in the same year as *Circle* was published.<sup>436</sup> In one of these images a brief notation reading 'Drawings for Gropius' rears its head (fig.74). The note reads:

Drawings for Gropius  
The square  
The circle  
The cylinder  
squarish  
curved  
example of the sculptural  
elements<sup>437</sup>.

It is an elementary approach to sculptural cognition that treads close to the abstract approach of the constructivists, but which also recalls Cezanne's admonition to trace nature back into the elementary shapes of the cylinder, the sphere and the cone so often presented as a theoretical root for cubist practice. Indeed, in the de facto introduction to *Circle*, Naum Gabo declared that "the immediate source from which the Constructive idea derives is Cubism", though he qualified the statement backwardly by adding, "although it had almost the character of a repulsion rather than an attraction."<sup>438</sup> No such repulsion appears to have over taken Moore, and in a conversation with Maurice de Sausmarez in 1969, he made it clear where his commitments lay:

A great deal of what was done then in England was a sort of 'catching-up' on what had been initiated mainly in Paris in the twenties and earlier. And for me Paris in the thirties, my meeting with Picasso, Giacometti, Paul Eluard and André Breton

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'constructivist' umbrella". Jeremy Lewison (ed.), *Circle: Constructive Art in Britain 1934-40*, exhibition (Kettle's Yard, Cambridge, 1982), p.5

<sup>436</sup> HMF1344; HMF1365; HMF1390

<sup>437</sup> HMF1390

<sup>438</sup> Gabo, "The Constructive Idea In Art", *Circle*, p.3

was far more important than Unit One and other episodes here. Unit One was really only a gathering together of English talent which had got its chief sustenance, not from England but from outside.<sup>439</sup>

Elsewhere, Moore pronounced that he was “rather glad not to have an English ‘tradition of sculpture’ behind me”, before declaring, apparently without irony, that Picasso and the British Museum were the only sources of inspiration he “ever really needed”.<sup>440</sup> The truth of it, read through his stylistic oscillations, is that Moore’s thinking was always more variegated and his practice more heterogeneous than was the case with the majority of his contemporaries, and that he was always keen to place himself in the lineage of the most significant artists both around him and preceding him.

Of the comparison to Picasso, Dawn Ades has written:

Moore is one of rare artists, like Picasso, who, while being undeniably part of a Modernist tradition, responds directly in his art to the immediate conditions of human life... Out of the contradictions between often threatening or deadly conditions and Moore’s irrepressible belief in the significance of life in its human and organic aspects, there comes a tension which contributes to the vitality of all his work.<sup>441</sup>

Meanwhile, Jane Beckett and Fiona Russell wrote his heterogeneity best when they suggested that, in Moore’s work, he was able to successfully “negotiate a sculptural language between Picasso’s quixotic, humorous and at times barbarous sculptural pieces, Surrealist discontinuity with reality, and the geometric, mechanistic ideology of the Constructivists.”<sup>442</sup> All these points can be found in these early drawings for the commission.

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<sup>439</sup> Maurice de Sausmarez (ed.), “Ben Nicholson: A Studio International Special”, *Studio International*, London, 1969, pp.23-24, quoted in Wilkinson, *Henry Moore: Writings and Conversations*, pp.161-166. Moore also spoke to de Sausmarez about how often he visited Paris in this period, getting to know “what was going on there, from Cézanne and Cubism onwards.”

<sup>440</sup> Quoted in Russell, *Henry Moore*, p.129

<sup>441</sup> Dawn Ades, “Henry Moore, Sculpture and Drawings” in Susan Compton, (ed.), *British Art in the 20<sup>th</sup> Century: The Modern Movement*, exhibition, Royal Academy of Arts, London, 1987, pp.276-277.

Similarly, in Christopher Green’s comparison of Moore and Picasso, he noted: “Moore’s response to the Picasso of the late 1920s and 1930s was implicated in his much wider response to surrealism. In notes made in 1937 at the point of his deepest involvement with surrealism, Moore recorded his ‘dislike’ for surrealist ‘mixed salads of literary fantasy... pornographic shock stuff, and the echoes of nineties decadence’. His surrealism centred on Picasso, because enough of Picasso’s surrealist-related work centred not so much on the obviously literary or explicitly ‘pornographic’, however erotic, but rather on the human body as a physical presence.” Christopher Green, “Henry Moore and Picasso”, *Picasso & Modern British Art*, exhibition (Tate Britain, London, 2012), p.131

<sup>442</sup> Beckett and Russell (ed.), *Henry Moore: Critical Essays*, p.1

Alongside those notes in Moore's sketch books quoted previously appeared a series of abstract forms that reveal little: three cuboid forms in pencil reminiscent of a middle-point between Gropius's architectural style and Ben Nicholson's abstract reliefs, and two scribbled impressions of graduating depth. A boxed off drawing of a seated woman has been superimposed on to the drawing, but appears to be a later addition.

Another seemingly related page has a series of abbreviated and indistinct landscapes populated by groups of stick figures. They are accompanied by some scribbled notes to self: "Sculpture head & mountain top / with figure / walking / up / steps" and "Make some drawings / from architecture in / wonders of the past & / turn them into figures" (fig.75).<sup>443</sup> The direction of thought appears concerned with the quest for knowledge, the hierarchies of learning, and a sweeping commentary on the cultural histories of the world. At the bottom of the page, and labelled as such, is a drawing of the Rosetta Stone. What more potent a metaphor for the elusiveness of semiotic symbolism, and the role of objects in our excavation – both physical and mental – of the past could he have drawn upon?

In a third related drawing, Moore has just written his name and the words "Ideas for drawings 1937", the year of his letter to Gropius asking to see the Impington plans (Fig.76).<sup>444</sup> Rubbed out and scribbled over underneath we can just make out the form of Moore's surreal Elmwood *Family* from two to three years previous.<sup>445</sup> There *might* be the first conceptualisation of the suitability of a family theme, but without the deliberation that came later and a sense, in its physical removal from the page, that Moore acknowledged the work's formal unsuitability.

The sculpture referenced stayed and remains in Moore's personal collection, now part of the Henry Moore Foundation collection, and was among the works populating his studio at Perry Green in the 1940s as seen in the Lee Miller photos discussed towards the end of chapter four. And yet it remains largely absent from the literature on Moore, and entirely so in the most frequently employed biographies of Moore except for in relation to the unsettling drawings which Moore produced of it around the time he had rubbed it out of relation to the Gropius scheme, *Sculpture in a Setting* and *Five Figures in a Setting* (figs.77 and 78).<sup>446</sup>

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<sup>443</sup> HMF1365

<sup>444</sup> HMF1344v. Garrould identifies the similarity and relatedness of these three drawings. Garrould (ed.), *Henry Moore: Complete Drawings vol.2*, p.199

<sup>445</sup> LH161a. Bernard Meadows recalled that although the work is dated to 1935, Moore worked on it for a further five years, only completing it after the beginning of the war. Mitchinson (ed.), *Celebrating Moore*, p.150

<sup>446</sup> HMF1318 and HMF1319

Andrew Causey has considered drawings from this period such as *Mechanisms* (fig.79) in the context of some of Moore's most experimental 'ideas for sculpture' from the period, few of which were ever attempted or even possible in three dimensions, especially given Moore's self-instigated material limitations. His *Family* is the exception.

Having identified that the title was employed by Moore "to indicate two upright figures and a child hinted at lower down", Causey offers a reading of the difference between the two versions of the family.

Moore was using sculpture and pictorial art for different purposes. He wanted us to see the connection between them, but sculpture was to be elegantly crafted and formally resolved while drawings might suggest sexual imagery or carry overtones of violence.<sup>447</sup>

What is of particular significance in such a reading is the fundamental formal difference between a sculpture and a drawing. Certainly the lurid pinks running through *Five Figures in a Setting* shift the register of Moore's 1935 *Family* – quasi-machinic in its wooden form, and incontrovertibly present (the work stands over a metre tall) – to an organic one suffuse with sexual overtones. Less declamatory in its presence (reflecting its means of delivery), the drawing is able to reimagine the sculpture: a cipher for elaboration upon the original work's meaning. The effect this has on a work bearing the title *Family* is a disquieting one, and one replete with the experimentation of Moore's personal practice.

Similarly, the replacement of the homely space of his studio as described in Lee Miller's photos with the "silent, penumbral world" demarcated in his drawings suggests an implicit threat to – or from – the objects/characters depicted. Causey continues:

At the end of the 1930s, the distinction in Moore's art between the human figure and still life becomes barely perceptible...

Implicit in Moore's drawings for most of the decade had been a sense of semi-independence from sculpture... they are still marginally recognisable as Moore-like sculptural forms, but where sculptures are formally resolved and smooth in finish, the drawings seem to exhibit objects that are passive and defunct. They show the collapse of those properties that make the human figure human.<sup>448</sup>

With this designation of Moore's apparent differentiation between sculpture and drawing's potential, Causey also offers a way into thinking about a collapse in Moore's

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<sup>447</sup> Causey, *The Drawings of Henry Moore*, pp.91-98

<sup>448</sup> Ibid, p.98



conceptualisation of his art. To register Moore's re-imaginings of his own works as now "passive and defunct", and at the level of still life, appears the opposite of his imminent turn to a public art that was purposefully utilitarian.

Indeed, in a 1942 sketch that preceded one of Moore's most recognised and least understood works, *Crowd Looking at a Tied-Up Object* (Fig.80), we might find further suggestion of the artist's growing awareness of the power of large scale public works to impress, to beguile, to enrapture, and to mean something more than small scale works for the private market were capable. There, Moore penned a gathered crowd of anonymous men and woman staring up at a monolith covered with a shroud. But as they huddle together, towered over by this pregnant monument in anticipation, they turn away from two smaller works labelled merely "stones" by Moore. These 'stones' appear to stand in for and mimic Moore's own sculptures from the late '30s which, ignored by the crowd, are rendered mute.

That Moore retained both the sculpture and the associated drawings for his 1935 *Family* in his personal collection, and that they appear to have been influential, if invertedly so, on the development of his subsequent families, is surely noteworthy. But in his resolve to relocate Moore's surreal and subversive tendencies, Causey finds Moore's subsequent turn to representational form only bland.<sup>449</sup> There is little elaboration on what it might mean for an artist to have presented his own works as "passive and defunct", especially with regards to the way he would then go on to re-imagine the family theme in following years, not to mention the political climate of the late 1930s which appears to have directed his turn towards neo-classicism with the preparatory drawings for Senate House.

By the time Moore began sketching drawings towards the commission in 1943-44 (figs.81-91), he had completed his shelter drawings cycle and was in the latter stages of completing his *Madonna and Child*.<sup>450</sup> That these drawings came off the back of these projects perhaps makes their similarities inevitable, but in at least one of the drawings presents a bookish version of a Madonna right alongside his ideas.<sup>451</sup> Like his earliest sketches towards the Madonna, the drawings were no more than ideas, composed only with the intention of thinking through thematic and compositional possibilities in very basic terms. For the most part, these ideas are limited to two parents and one or two children gathered together

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<sup>449</sup> Ibid, p.133

<sup>450</sup> In a note on the front page of the sketch book, Moore wrote: "Family group for Impington/ March 1944", though some of the drawings that were contained inside – now largely dispersed – are dated from 1943, suggesting even more obviously the interrelation of Moore's Madonna and Family projects. *Family Group Notebook*, Garrould (ed.), *Henry Moore: Complete Drawings vol.3*, pp.201-208

<sup>451</sup> HMF2202

prosaically, in conversation or in the midst of play, or they face formally forwards as though gathered for a portrait. That that 'parents' are frequently presented as two mothers suggests a disinclination on Moore's part to introduce the male figure into his work, and in a later sketch from 1945, finished to a higher degree than most of the comparable works, Moore even seems to have presented the left hand mother figure in terms reminiscent of one of the final sketches for his *Madonna and Child* (fig.92).<sup>452</sup> Where the father does appear, he is employed as a compositional tool, adding triangular structure to the grouping or counter-balancing the mother figure on equal terms.

Comparing the works, however, John Russell didn't find Moore's sketches for the family to be so coherent as his works towards the *Madonna and Child*:

When compared... with the elaborate terraced construction of the Northampton group these early sketches for a family group tend to look forlorn and stilted: the nobility of the initial gesture is not quite carried through, and the individual figures in each group remain undeniably apart. The undifferentiated bare surfaces of their bodies cause the eye to slide this way and that, nowhere finding either the fastidious detail of the Northampton group or the unifying rhythm which gives that group its tranquil majesty.<sup>453</sup>

Russell's problematisation of the group's relative formal incoherence, however, expects something other from the sketches than what Moore seems to be offering. At this early stage of Moore's thought process, I would argue, there is a considerable awareness of the demands of formal rhythm and balance, and where there is a lack of rhythm it results in a more candid portrayal of familiarity. This is not the 'ease and repose' that Moore sought with his *Madonna*, but rather an expression of family life replete with the circumstance of family dynamics, caught momentarily in the trappings of a sketch. Whereas Moore's earliest notes apparently towards the commission from 1937 suggested a range of ideas snatched at and played with, here we find measured elaborations upon a pre-determined model. If the uniformity of their contents suggests only Moore's early conception of how the sculpture should broadly work – explicit familial connections rather than independent figures grouped together – then the suggested movement and togetherness is a step away from the separation and stillness aimed at with the *Madonna*.

But for a brief mention in the sketchbook's inside cover, none of these drawings is indicated as the preferred work to be scaled up, but all contribute to Moore's development of the

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<sup>452</sup> HMF2329, see fig. 51 (HMF2175b)

<sup>453</sup> Russell, *Henry Moore*, p.123

theme in the subsequent maquettes, of which he would model fourteen in clay. Of those, nine were cast in bronze of editions of between seven and nine.<sup>454</sup> Throughout these idea pieces, Moore's conception of the need for a sense of interconnectedness between the figures present is apparent, as the children are held sensitively and playfully between the parental figures. The pertinence of these forms to the ideals of Morris' village college model, and to Fry's designation of the cyclical life of the community of which the school is only a part, and where 'education comes into its own', is clear and presented thoughtfully and deliberately. A sense of interconnectivity, familiarity and humanity is present throughout.

The more successful maquettes, meanwhile, suggest an engagement with something more than just form. Of these works, the maquettes that would be scaled up for his two large-form families (figs.93 and 94), Gail Gelburd has written:

there is a direct interaction between the parent and child both physically and psychologically. The adult and child forms are connected by their actions while the two large figures are physical linked by an arm.<sup>455</sup>

That sense of physical and psychological interaction is, I think, key to Moore's intention. But beyond the compositional coherence there is a fission in the Barclay School model that challenges such suggestions of psychological attachment.<sup>456</sup> Employing the motif of the split-head that Moore had now been returning to for ten years, Moore adeptly fractured the intimacy of his family group with a gesture which recalled Moore's shelter drawing sketch depicting a falling bomb (*Devastated Buildings and Platform Scene*) and his Elmwood *Family* of 1935 whilst also prefiguring his later figure for the Festival of Britain that was said to be "sadly reminiscent of the pitiful human remains found after the dreadful discoveries at Bergen-Belsen" (fig.95).<sup>457</sup> Whether depicting a lacerated skull or a primal scream, all these works possess the violence that Causey suggested were the sole province of Moore's drawings.

That Moore scaled this work up for a second maquette with the split head in-tact suggests Moore's extended consideration of the motif even if the detail would be replaced in the final work (fig.96). There, however, the split head had been replaced only by a face written with an uncomfortably benign expression that, like the Madonna before it, might speak of

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<sup>454</sup> LH227 – LH233, LH235, LH238 and LH239

<sup>455</sup> Mitchinson, *Celebrating Moore*, p.211

<sup>456</sup> LH239 is about 13cm tall, LH259 is almost 23cm tall.

<sup>457</sup> Quoted in Dorcas Tylor and Axel Lapp, *Sculpture for a New Europe: Public Sculpture from Britain and the two Germanies: 1945-68*, exhibition (Leeds City Art Gallery, Leeds, 1999), unpaginated

concern as readily as it might comfort. Here was a family group intended for the confines of a school with a representative father figure that had started its formal life scarred and mutilated, only to be patched up and left indifferent in the final work, as was the effect of war.

By the time of the bronze work's resolution, the situation in which Moore was working had changed and he was, significantly, now a father. But the message remains much the same, and this prehistory draws a level of ambiguity into the Barclay work which undermines accepted versions of its being successfully representative of the "political order" instigated in the post-war period. This ambiguity, I believe, and the direct relation of these incidents to Moore's earlier works, specifically to the shelter drawings and indeed to his earlier surreal experiments, suggests the line of continuity between them, and their collective commentary on both the significance of family and community in the reintegration and reconstruction of society, and the inherent threat to these groupings from the war. The extent to which the Barclay work represents these ideals will be discussed in chapter seven, but in the context of Moore's plans for an unresolved Impington commission, and in the context of war, Moore's conceptualisation of the family as a suitable structure does not appear to be the whole picture.

Moore undertook to capture the way the most successful maquettes might have worked on a large scale by taking a series of photographs shortly after their completion in his garden at Perry Green, some of which were reproduced in the catalogue raisonné of the same year. In the photograph of Moore's scaled up maquette (fig.97), the father's scars/screams are mirrored by the light which reflects down the centre of both the mother and the child's faces. The fragility of the father's limbs, meanwhile, foreshadow those of the pathetic fallen warriors of the early '50s that James Hyman described resonantly as reflecting "Cold War anxieties about man's predicament."<sup>458</sup>

The interrelation of these works, among the very few representations of the male figure in Moore's sculpture, might indeed refer to Moore's self-conception as both an artist and man, and continue that line of self-questioning gestured at by Causey. If Moore's introduction of the father figure into his emblematic maternal pairing was intended to be representative of the sense of hope and progression inherent in the designs for educational and social reconstruction for which the works were intended, how telling that his

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<sup>458</sup> Hyman, *The Battle for Realism*, p.90

unceremonious disembowelling of the male figure came so soon in the context of the post-war project.

Similarly, in another photograph published in the 1944 volume of Moore's work (fig.98), Moore's employment of that other regular trope, the burrowed holes which pierce both the father and mother at breast height, appears less a formal solution bringing the whole of the work together than an emptying out of both of the parents' insides as the children are suckled and thrust forward from their absences.<sup>459</sup>

These lines of continuity between Moore's family works and his shelter drawings and even back to his sketches for the Senate House commission are also present in the addition of books into the characters' hands in a number of the maquettes, bringing his thinking about the suitable shape of educational commissions over a seven year period full circle. As with the Senate House works, this simple formal signifier stands in effortlessly for the domain of learning to which he was responding, and is a less pointed but similarly purposeful motif to his early conceptualisation of the Rosetta Stone as a pertinent metaphor.

In an essay on Moore for what would become the first instalment of his catalogue raisonné, published that year, Herbert Read again invoked an opaque medieval past to account for Moore's turn to the public arena.

In the case of the Impington group, some of the same considerations which influenced the conception of the Northampton *Madonna and Child* were again present – a specific symbolism was required by the terms of the commission, and the artist, like his medieval predecessors, willingly accepted the 'direction' given to him. In this way Moore took a further step towards the solution of a major problem of our time: the social assimilation of the idioms of modern art. Those idioms arise out of the spiritual crisis of our time, but to a disturbing extent they remain a private language, shared perhaps by a happy few, but not accepted by the public.<sup>460</sup>

That Moore had left behind his earliest ideas on the subject and was taking forward the formal experiments he had conducted towards work for the public arena suggests that he was thinking quite candidly about such an "assimilation of modern forms", and in a language intended to be publicly legible. Moreover, in the provision of books to the sculpture's protagonists, he appears to be providing the means of his own visual and

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<sup>459</sup> Writing about public sculpture in 1954, Alloway wrote that "in modern sculpture voids within solids do not mean mutilation", speaking only of intention. But to think about public sculpture must be to think about public reception as equal to said intention. Lawrence Alloway, "The Siting of Sculpture", *The Listener*, Vol.LI, No.1320, June 17 1954, p.1045

<sup>460</sup> Herbert Read, "Introduction", 1944, p.xxviii

textual education to these unnamed protagonists: conveying to them the means to self-improvement and self-development so central to the advanced democratisation of knowledge in the twentieth century, including, significantly, access to and understanding of the most current trends in art.

After 1936, Moore had become necessarily confronted with the reality of a widening audience for his art, many of whom might not have been interested in the sort of independent formal expression that characterises much of his and his contemporary sculptors' and painters' works before that time. As such, for the brief period that I have designated for this study, Moore appeared to gradually open up aspects of his work, formally as well as in terms of the commissions he accepted, with deliberate and considered purpose. In pursuing such personally-motivated themes – ones identifiable and explicable irrespective of pre-knowledge – Moore projected a sensibility of accord onto the works produced for public spaces he felt an affinity towards. Whereas Read looked at Moore's work on the family theme in relation to its functionality as art – always 'fine' or 'great' art – Moore's apparent recognition of the project to which it originated, and his sense of the value of that project, exposes his thematic and stylistic choices as available for the sort of 'spontaneous give-and-take' which Read considers quite beyond the normal people for whom the sculpture was intended: children, their families and the local community.<sup>461</sup>

These were the groups targeted in the post-war period as the desired recipients of and participants in extended cultural provision, as enunciated by Sir William Rothenstein in 1946 when he wrote of the aims of the Tate gallery being "to quicken the responsiveness of those innumerable people who possess, often almost unconsciously, the capacity to enjoy the arts".<sup>462</sup> Rothenstein's sympathetic support for the democratisation of access to the arts was quite contrary to Read's recalcitrance quoted previously, and representative of the consequential relationship between access and understanding. It was on the public stage, rather than in academic theory, that the arts were opened up to all as a result of which British society was reformulated.

But these maquettes also represented Moore's exploitation of the conditions of reproduction that enabled him to balance an apparent desire to work on public

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<sup>461</sup> From this point of departure, Moore's sculptural ideas from 1943-44, colloquial and rudimentary, might be seen, similarly, as gestures in the direction of a localism. Two years earlier he had moved from Hampstead to the small village of Much Hadham in Hertfordshire in which he would spend the rest of his life, and in which his own family would be formalised in 1946 with the birth of his only daughter, Mary.

<sup>462</sup> Rothenstein, "What's New at the Tate?", *The Evening Standard*, 15 April 1946; quoted in Stallabrass, "The Mother and Child Theme", p.21

commissions and to cater for a newly formulated market of buyers for modern art that would appear in the subsequent decades. David Sylvester noted in an article of July 1948 for the *Burlington Magazine* that though Moore had previously produced maquettes in advance of large works, his maquettes for the *Madonna and Child* were the first works to be cast expressly for sale.<sup>463</sup> They stand alone as independent works rather than merely as preparatory works for a larger sculpture.

This commission was thus to be a turning point in Moore's career, as he moved away from the ethos of truth to materials, or the practice of working with the particular properties of sculptural materials such as stone and wood that had engrossed him in the early years of his career, towards a long and sustained experimentation with bronze which drastically altered Moore's output as well as his commercial potential.

On better footing when it came to formal concerns, Herbert Read discussed Moore's coming to 'the bronze thing' and his sense of its potential thus:

It was no longer a question of the material (stone) imposing its qualities on the ideas of the sculptor; the ideas could now be rendered without physical compromise into a ductile material. The forced suspension of carving during the war had given the sculptor the opportunity to reconsider his ideals, and he began to recognize, not the error of his previous dogmatism, but its limitation in terms of sculptural form.<sup>464</sup>

Better to say the removal of physical compromise dictated only by personal whim was replaced by the need – and the desire – to compromise conceptually, and to work through that compromise as part and parcel of the artwork's meaning.

The following chapter will look more closely at the paths through which the government's involvement in the democratisation of culture was manifest and Moore's involvement therein.

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<sup>463</sup> David Sylvester, "The Evolution of Henry Moore's Sculpture II", *The Burlington Magazine*, Vol. 90, No. 544 (July 1948), p.190

<sup>464</sup> Read, *Henry Moore: A Study*, p.165

## 6. 'A subtle collaboration with the land': *The Memorial Figure* at the Dartington Hall School

In 1945 after the end of war, Moore was commissioned to produce a work for the grounds of the Dartington School as a memorial for Christopher Martin who had died suddenly before the war's end after a battle with tuberculosis.<sup>465</sup> The result was Moore's *Memorial Figure*, a large stone recumbent form in classical garb completed and installed on a vista overlooking the gardens at Dartington two years later (fig.99).

Martin had been both the school's arts administrator and the administrator of a research project set up with the Elmhursts' support titled the *Arts Enquiry*. This research project came out of a considered need to "collect and assess accurate information about the conditions existing in the arts" during wartime, and was part of the cultural dialogue – side by side with the work of the Council for the Encouragement of Music and the Arts (CEMA) – that supported the extension of state-led arts provision during wartime leading, ultimately, to the setting up of the Arts Council in 1945.<sup>466</sup> The project resulted in three publications concerned with the visual arts, music, and the factual film respectively, and Moore had known Martin as a result of sitting on the committee for the visual arts panel.<sup>467</sup>

This chapter will explore the foundation of both the *Arts Enquiry* and the Dartington School in terms of both Martin and the Elmhursts' ambitions and intentions, before a reading of the suitability of Moore's reclining figure in relation to the thinking behind each project, in relation to the landscape surrounding the site for which it was designed, and in relation to Moore's proximity to these circles of influence during wartime.

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<sup>465</sup> Victor Bonham-Carter, *Dartington Hall – The History of an Experiment* (Phoenix House Ltd, London, 1958), p.136; quoted in Anne Rosser Upchurch, "'Missing' from policy history: The Dartington Hall Arts Enquiry, 1941-1947", *International Journal of Cultural Policy*, Vol.19, No.5, 2013, p.613

<sup>466</sup> Ibid

<sup>467</sup> *The Visual Arts: A Report Sponsored by the Dartington Hall Trustees* (Political and Economic Planning and the Oxford University Press, London, 1946). The report the first of four reports commissioned by the Trustees, though the report concerned with Drama never came to publication.



The Dartington School was set up by the Elmhursts in 1925 as an ‘experiment in rural education’, with practical similarities to Morris’ scheme at Impington but on a significantly different scale and with a different conception of community.<sup>468</sup> Like Impington, it was conceptualised as a setting for an arts oriented programme that would provide not only for its students but also the local estate workers and indeed the wider community, and both were intended to offer an alternative form of education pertinent to rural life, intended as an exemplar to be developed upon.<sup>469</sup>

But whereas Morris’s scheme was designed to provide for the pre-existing countryside communities of Cambridgeshire, the Elmhursts vision was to create a utopian community in the English countryside, influenced by a pre-conceived idea of ruralism inspired by their respective backgrounds and a broadly liberal politics, and was autonomous and self-financed. This was the result of the Elmhursts’ ideological zeal and was made possible by Dorothy’s inherited wealth, her father having been Secretary of the Navy under President Grover Cleveland before making a fortune in “transportation, utility companies, tobacco and banking”, and her mother having been an inheritor of Standard Oil Company wealth.<sup>470</sup>

Jack Pritchard once referred to Dartington as the “favoured school” of the “artygentsia” at that time, with Ben Nicholson and Barbara Hepworth’s children amongst those schooled there in its early years.<sup>471</sup> As such, it is likely Moore knew of the Dartington School project early on, if not more pointedly through an interest in their ongoing educational experiment or as a result of the Elmhursts’ early patronage of his work.<sup>472</sup>

The *Arts Enquiry*, meanwhile, was set up as an irrefutably political engine for directing social policy in 1941, in tandem with the incipient CEMA. Both were designed in response to the demands for ‘a better future’ that accompanied the bombs falling on London in the months previous – though the latter was more actively involved in wholesale reform – and both were geared towards expanding upon experiments such as those conducted at Dartington and Impington on a national level. Indeed, both schools would become the site for temporary exhibitions erected during wartime, organised by the WAAC and CEMA in

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<sup>468</sup> Peter Cox, *The Arts at Dartington 1940-1983: A Personal Account* (Published by the author and distributed by the Dartington Hall Trust Archive, 2005), p.6

<sup>469</sup> Upchurch, “‘Missing’ from policy history”, p.612

<sup>470</sup> Ibid. Dorothy’s sister-in-law, Gertrude Vanderbilt Whitney, was equally notable, having founded the Whitney Museum of American Art.

<sup>471</sup> The children of Bertrand Russell, JD Bernal, Gustav Holst, Aldous Huxley and GE Moore are just some of those who also attended Dartington at around this time, as well as Clement and Lucien Freud. For an account of time spent there, see Miriam Gross’s account of her experiences <http://standpointmag.co.uk/node/3875/full>, accessed 24<sup>th</sup> Feb 2014.

<sup>472</sup> Rachel Esther Harrison, *Dorothy Elmhirst and the Visual Arts at Dartington Hall 1925-1945*, unpublished PhD Thesis, University of Plymouth, 2002

collaboration with the British Institute for Adult Education. These linkages between pre-war educational experiments and the implementation of national plans in the '40s are central to my approach here.

Michael Young, the architect of the Labour Party's manifesto for the 1945 election, was another schooled there in the 1930s and later wrote a thorough and highly personal account of the Elmhursts' work at Dartington.<sup>473</sup> He describes at length the experimental nature of the school and the qualities that the school harboured, conceived largely in distinction from what other schools in England were not, and with a view to what education could be.<sup>474</sup>

There were to be children in it, but it was not to be an institution of the book. Its classrooms would be 'a farm, a garden, workshops, play grounds, woods and freedom... Quite how the farm and gardens, forests and freedom were to be used for education could be left unstated. The intention was to have them at all, not just as the setting school but as an essential part of it... This intention committed them to include in the experiment many of the features of a rounded society.<sup>475</sup>

Such a description readily accounts for the anomalous nature of the Dartington experiment, and its unsuitability as a model for the wholesale reform of the educational framework in Britain after the war. But, says Peter Cox, the administrator of the school after Christopher Martin's death, the experimental nature of their designs allowed for a "remarkable degree of freedom to explore ideas and follow their own instincts".<sup>476</sup> That attitude permeated the Elmhursts' approach to education and, more broadly, to research in the fields of politics and cultural planning in which they contributed and supported so much important work in the period.

Of broad significance here was Leonard and Dorothy Elmhirst's involvement with Political and Economic Planning (P.E.P.), a British policy think tank set up in 1931 to advance upon the ideas espoused in an article by Max Nicholson's from the same year entitled "A National

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<sup>473</sup> As a mark of its influence on his development, Lord (Michael) Young took Dartington as his honorary barony upon receipt of his peerage in 1978. Malcolm Dean, "Lord Young of Dartington", Obituary, *The Guardian*, 16<sup>th</sup> January 2002.

<sup>474</sup> "No corporal punishment, indeed no punishment at all; no prefects; no uniforms; no Officers' Training Corps; no segregation of the sexes; no compulsory games, compulsory religion or compulsory anything else; no more Latin; no more Greek; no competition; no jingoism." Michael Young, *The Elmhursts at Dartington: The Creation of a Utopian Community* (Routledge & Kegan Paul, London, 1982), p.131

<sup>475</sup> In a more candid expression of the experimental nature of the school, Young continued: "In more than half a century there has never been a full statement of what Dartington is about. People have to leave it alone or, if they cannot show such forbearance, puzzle it out for themselves, each arriving at his own interpretation, as I am having to do in writing this memoir." Young, *The Elmhursts at Dartington*, p.98

<sup>476</sup> Cox, *The Arts at Dartington*, p.7

Plan for Britain.”<sup>477</sup> The article – and thus the group, too – was intended as a counter to the Labour orthodoxy on planning with its calls for an explicitly capitalist plan for national reconstruction: one that advocated wide-ranging institutional reforms that identified ‘planning’ as an inversion of ‘control’, i.e., lessening the power of the State without removing it entirely, preferring a system of ‘responsible self-government’ with particular attention to the control of industry.<sup>478</sup> This came largely as a result of the group’s members being largely liberal-minded “white-collar professionals, drawn mainly from the professions, the civil service, and the universities, and younger management types from the world of commerce and industry” who shared a fundamental belief in private enterprise.<sup>479</sup>

Such an explicit attestation of individual growth ultimately flew in the face of reforms as they were enacted after 1945 along more closely Keynesian lines, but the ideas presented by P.E.P. were emblematic of broader pre-war trends that prioritised individualism, as well as the early acknowledgement of the significant part that planning had to play in the reshaping of society long before the war made it not only possible, but unavoidable.<sup>480</sup>

It was as a result of the Elmhirsts’ involvement in, and their bankrolling of the project that they were afforded the opportunity to put together and publish the *Arts Enquiry* under the aegis of P.E.P., with the meetings conducted from the P.E.P. offices in Queen Anne’s Gate, SW1 (just metres from Moore’s first public commission, the Underground HQ).<sup>481</sup> But the roots of the *Enquiry* were to be found within the confines of Dartington, and with opposing political roots, showcasing the Elmhirsts’ canniness when it came to matters of reform.

After CEMA had been set up in the summer of 1940, Christopher Martin, in his capacity as head of the Dartington School art department, had been quick to establish contact with its Secretary General, Mary Glasgow, suggesting the school as a location for a series of CEMA sponsored concerts and as the Council’s regional headquarters. That same summer, G.D.H. Cole, the socialist economist and historian, was resident at the Fabian Summer School held at Dartington and asked Martin to support his work on the Nuffield College Social

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<sup>477</sup> Arthur Marwick, “Middle Opinion in the Thirties: Planning, Progress and Political ‘Agreement’”, *The English Historical Review*, Vol. 79, No. 311, April 1946, pp. 285-298; Daniel Ritschel, *The Politics of Planning: The Debate on Economic Planning in Britain in the 1930s* (Clarendon Press, Oxford, 1997), pp.144-182

<sup>478</sup> Ritschel, *The Politics of Planning*, pp.146-148

<sup>479</sup> Ibid, p.152

<sup>480</sup> Hobsbawm has described the way ‘plan’ and ‘planning’ became buzz-words in social-democratic politics throughout Europe in the ‘30s as a method by which to “escape from the vicious cycle of the Great Slump”, taking a lead from Russia’s Five Year Plans. He writes: “The trauma of the Great Slump was underlined by the fact that the one country that had clamorously broken with capitalism appeared to be immune to it.” Thus planning was, from the start, underwritten by an idea of thinking through, or beyond capitalism. Eric Hobsbawm, *Age of Extremes: The Short Twentieth Century 1914-1991* (Abacus, London, 1994), p.96

<sup>481</sup> They also conducted an agricultural research group under the aegis of PEP in this period.

Reconstruction Survey, a post-war planning imperative set up by the Labour Party.<sup>482</sup>

It was conceptions of planning within a socialist framework such as that organised by Cole that P.E.P. had sought to define itself in opposition to, and yet conversely, it was through Cole's encouragement that Martin took the work they had done together forward on a grander scale, as a result of which the *Arts Enquiry* was formulated with the support of both P.E.P. and C.E.M.A.<sup>483</sup> This negotiation of the two streams of influence might suitably represent both the breadth of the Elmhirst's interests and the ambiguity of their political alignment. It also suggests the close proximity of the various strands of thought with relation to reconstruction which contributed to the consensus found after the war, even if before the war they had been fundamentally oppositional.<sup>484</sup>

Christopher Martin was named the director of the *Enquiry*, Peter Cox the secretary, and one of their first projects was to undertake an investigative survey of the state of the arts in Cambridgeshire, where Morris's Village Colleges were of particular interest.<sup>485</sup> This was followed by a study of northern Welsh villages before the appointment, and the enthusiasm, of Julian Huxley, brought in as chairman, pushed the *Enquiry* forwards. With the support of Kenneth Clark who was already established at the head of the WAAC and involved with CEMA, they set up the first of the enquiries into the arts.

In a review of the work conducted at Dartington, Victor Bonham-Carter described the *Arts Enquiry* as "a brave and valuable piece of research," and described its achievements thus:

It succeeded in assembling a large mass of facts about an obscure and largely unexplored subject, and made them intelligible not only to the ordinary reader, but also to those in authority who, towards the end of war, had to make decisions about the patronage and subvention of the arts in our national life.<sup>486</sup>

Similarly, in his review of the interplay between the state and the visual arts over two centuries, Nicholas Pearson identified the report as "a seminal document in the development of the Arts Council of Great Britain", with the transformation of CEMA into a fully chartered state-funded institution for support of the arts one of the enquiry's key proposals. But though the work of the enquiry appeared to be complete by 1944, at which point its suggestions had made a strong effect on the governmental policy being drafted having been passed directly to CEMA by members of its panel, a number of whom were

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<sup>482</sup> Cox, *The Arts at Dartington*, p.12

<sup>483</sup> Ritschel, *The Politics of Planning*, p.15; Cox, *The Arts at Dartington*, pp.23-24

<sup>484</sup> Ibid, pp.329-347

<sup>485</sup> Cox, *The Arts at Dartington*, p.24

<sup>486</sup> Bonham-Carter, *Dartington Hall*, pp.136-142

shared, the delayed publication of the Report until 1946 came after the Arts Council had already been set up.<sup>487</sup> It is perhaps for this reason that the *Arts Enquiry* has been largely absent from cultural histories of this period of transformation, as has been explored recently in an article by Anna Rosser Upchurch.<sup>488</sup> Further, she suggests that animosity between the administrative staff of the two groups over the roles each were supposed, or attempting to play led to a deliberate writing out of the *Art Enquiry* from histories of the Arts Council by those closely involved.<sup>489</sup>

Alongside the four figures already mentioned, the visual arts panel included the architect, dedicated Marxist and founder of the Artists' International Association, Misha Black, the directors of the National, Tate and Leeds City Art Galleries respectively, Kenneth Clark, John Rothenstein and Philip Hendy, as well as E. M. O'R. Dickey who had assisted Clark with the administration of the WAAC. Also present were the artist and designer Barnett Freedman, an acquaintance of Moore's going back to their time at the Royal College, the art critics Philip James and Eric Newton, H.S. Williamson of the Chelsea School of Art and Audrey Martin, who would later hold significant positions as Chief Art Inspector to the London County Council and Arts Advisor for the Hertfordshire County Council through which Moore's bronze *Family* would be commissioned.<sup>490</sup> As Rachel Harrison has suggested, "it was no coincidence that many of them were already on the Art Panel of CEMA" given the groups' early coincidence.<sup>491</sup>

To read through the minutes and the written reports carried out on the *Arts Enquiry's* behalf, it becomes quickly apparent that Moore was among the least involved of the group's members and that, in fact, just a few of these members appear to have carried out most of the leg work for the committee. That is not to say Moore didn't involve himself, and records from the meetings demonstrate that he was in attendance for the majority of the fortnightly meetings of the panel.<sup>492</sup> Rather, one might conclude that Moore was thought more necessary to the group as a representative of practicing artists over and

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<sup>487</sup> Nicholas Pearson, *The State and the Visual Arts: A Discussion of State Intervention in the Visual Arts in Britain, 1760-1981* (The Open University, Milton Keynes, 1981), p.43; quoted in Upchurch, "Missing from Policy History", p.618

<sup>488</sup> Upchurch, "Missing from Policy History", pp.610-622

<sup>489</sup> The attested independence of the Arts Enquiry panel, and the anonymity of its committee, meant they did not feel they needed to put forward proposals "likely to be acceptable to the Government", which was problematic for members of CEMA who were working indirectly for the government in official capacities. Upchurch, "Missing from Policy History", p.614

<sup>490</sup> Upchurch, "Missing from Policy History", p.616; Rothenstein, *Summer's Lease*, p.99

<sup>491</sup> Harrison, *Dorothy Elmhirst*, p.215. The CEMA panel included Rothenstein, Clark, Hendy and Moore as well as Duncan Grant, Samuel Courtauld, and the future Secretary-General the Arts Council William Emrys Williams.

<sup>492</sup> Upchurch notes that 8 to 10 of the 14 members of the panel were generally in attendance, a figure which included Moore who missed just four of the meetings whilst commuting into London from Hoglands. Upchurch, "Missing from Policy History", p.615; Dartington Hall Trust records of the Arts Enquiry group, T/AEE/2

above his ability to conduct the necessary research that a future publication required. That it was Moore who was chosen seems inevitable given his support from and friendship with the majority of the more involved members of the panel, not to mention his frequently commented upon amiability. But to consider his involvement on the numerous committees he committed to collectively, especially with Moore having moved away from London at the start of the war, is a mark of his belief in these projects and his desire to be involved. If his direct involvement cannot be substantiated through the minutes of those meetings, then it is only through his sculptural response to the people and projects most closely aligned with such thinking that we might come to understand his position.

Of the role that the arts should play in society, and the role the state should play in realising that role, the *Enquiry* declared unequivocally in the preface to its publication:

The visual arts are one of the manifestations of quality by which a nation is judged, and no society can afford to dispense with their humanising effect. But to-day in England few can feel that the visual arts are accorded the recognition and encouragement they need, or that the conditions exist in which a great artistic tradition can be formed. Those concerned to improve the existing state of affairs know all too well the complexity of the problem...

It is true that if a great artistic tradition is to be formed, the existing body of patronage must be greatly extended, which will in turn make possible a greater quantity of production. But the greatness of the tradition will ultimately depend on the discrimination and knowledge of the public and on the originality, skill and integrity of the artists.<sup>493</sup>

It was with this final point that the *Enquiry* appeared most concerned, as it is returned to time and again in the published text. Upchurch has drawn particular attention to the report's criticality of previous attempts at support for the arts in statements such as "hardly anything has been done to form and improve public taste" and "the majority of people do not know how to look at works of art. They need help and guidance. But far too little attention is paid by the galleries to this need for education."<sup>494</sup> Such indictments are prescient of the directions that support for the arts in society have taken in the following decades, starting in the post-war era as a result of the attempts made by the constituents of both CEMA and the *Arts Enquiry* panel. Whatever individual squabbles might have existed were ultimately contributory towards the national policies towards which they were

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<sup>493</sup> *The Visual Arts*, p.9

<sup>494</sup> Ibid, p.16, 27; quoted in Upchurch, "'Missing' from Policy History", p.617

pushing for. What is more, these various factions' ability to compromise seems to have been made possible by the same sense of collective endeavour and collective responsibility that had made them necessary.

Ritschel, in his work on the variety of groups concerned with economic planning in the 1930s, sought to demonstrate and make transparent the complexity and the variety of thinking towards social reform at that time, and specifically to break down the notion that all planning in the interwar period was Keynesian at root. Rather, the various groups engaged with planning for reform were unified by their progressive views from both the right and left wings.

By appealing equally to 'enlightened Conservatism', with its ideas of 'moulding private capital to socially useful purposes in place of its supersession by the State', to 'moderate Socialism' by its provision for 'increasing public control', and to 'Liberal ideas of national reconstruction', it was to cut across old party associations and unite 'all progressive elements' in the country behind the demand for planning.<sup>495</sup>

Such a need to cross old party lines became less necessary with the establishment of the war cabinet and the forms of consensus about the shape of reconstruction that developed socially after the publication of Beveridge's 1942 Social Insurance and Allied Services report which, though expressly socialist in origin, was followed and adopted via a roughly Keynesian approach that had, by then, already been adopted by many of the planners from the late '30s.

With such socially progressive plans taking root in society during wartime, and even thought possible, and with the legislation of the 1944 Education Act passed before the war was out, how might we conceptualise an artistic response? How might Moore's *Memorial Figure* speak visually of this rich narrative in the reconceptualization of British society both local and national, and the role that Christopher Martin and the Elmhursts played therein?

Talking about the commission a decade on, Moore recalled his conception of the sculpture's pertinent shape in relation to its intended location, a vantage point overlooking the gardens of Dartington which Martin had been so fond of.

It is situated on top of a rise, and when one stands near it and takes in the shape of it in relation to the vista one becomes aware that the raised knee repeats or echoes

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<sup>495</sup> Max Nicholson, 'A National Plan', *Week-End Review* (14 Feb 1931), p.202 and (28 Feb 1931), p.305; quoted in Ritschel, p.150

the gentle roll in the landscape. I wanted it to convey a sense of permanent tranquillity, a sense of being from which the stir and fret of human ways had been withdrawn, and all the time I was working on it I was very much aware that I was making a memorial to many generations of men who have engaged in a subtle collaboration with the land.<sup>496</sup>

That sense of its distance from the “stir and fret of human ways” is useful for defining both the difference of the locale for which the work was conceptualised and the sculpture’s thematic differences from those commissioned works which immediately preceded it. Dartington was a world away from the Britain of bombs and of reconstruction, and with Moore’s return to the reclining figure he made a deliberate turn away from the trajectory that took in all of his seated family members, constituents of a changing world, returning instead to a purer investigation of form that was traceable across centuries.

Wyndham Lewis, advancing upon that tranquillity of form espoused by Moore in an article for *The Listener* found the work typical of what he called “this artist’s type... small-headed, weighty, female figure[s]”, representing a return, as he had it, to a “pre-Picassoan phase in [Moore’s] work”.<sup>497</sup> Lewis included Moore’s shelter drawings in this ‘return’, before writing of the Dartington figure, “In the company of other women she is bleak and aloof. Such is the natural subject-matter of Henry Moore.”<sup>498</sup>

It was a sensibility shared by Herbert Read who compared the work’s “aloof calm” to one he considered present in the form of Moore’s Madonna.<sup>499</sup> Both figures drew these formal comparisons without acknowledgement of the significant thematic shift in Moore’s work, and to the repercussions inherent in what has regularly been termed Moore’s ‘humanism’ which suggests something quite contrary to such pronouncements of aloofness.

Notwithstanding the ambiguity of such a term as ‘pre-Picassoan’ given the temporal discontinuity inherent in the Spaniard’s oeuvre – something borrowed and replicated throughout Moore’s own, as discussed in chapter five – and given Moore’s awareness of Picasso from early in his career, Lewis’ intention was to examine and reappraise the ancient roots of Moore’s practice in order to render the work out of time, or beyond it. Read was aiming at something similar, with both writers’ intents underwritten by an attempt to ahistoricize Moore’s work. Lewis continued:

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<sup>496</sup> Henry Moore, “Sculpture in the Open Air”

<sup>497</sup> Wyndham Lewis, “Moore and Hepworth”, *The Listener*, 17 October 1946, p.505

<sup>498</sup> Ibid, p.505

<sup>499</sup> Read, *Henry Moore: A Study*, pp.167-169



It is a terrible thing for a great monumental artist to come at a time when even the most modest building goes up without difficulty: and as to the large-scale communal pieces that might be expected at such a time, no one even dreams of such expressions of communal enthusiasm. Only the state can cope with gifts of a monumental order. To have a number of these things lying about in our squares would be better than nothing, although the domestic architecture of Bloomsbury or Kensington would combine too surrealistically with Moore's recumbent sub-goddess.<sup>500</sup>

That Lewis deemed such public sculpture as only 'better than nothing', and that he couldn't ascertain the value of a dialogue, however 'surrealistic', being created between a sculpture and its surroundings, suggests a wilful ignorance on his part. Moore's conception of exactly such a dialogue in Bloomsbury with his Senate House drawings is testament to the value of such an operation. But Lewis's negation of the role of monumental sculpture in relation to modern design flew in the face of the Impington commission which Moore was still, effectively, working on – designed in relation to exactly such a 'modest' modern building – and undermined the significance of the Dartington figure's having been commissioned by a couple self-impelled to encourage and to enact, both independently and with recourse to the state, exactly such expressions of 'communal enthusiasm'. The Elmhursts' work was a push in the direction of popular support for the arts on both a micro and macro scale, and their legacy was to encourage the independence of the arts in a compromise with both the private and public spheres.

Lewis's commentary on the work came in a review of Moore's 1946 Leicester Galleries show, in which the work was shown alongside another reclining figure of a distinctly 'Picassoan' in order, his Elmwood *Reclining Figure* that was sculpted simultaneous with the Dartington work and only mentioned offhandedly in Lewis's review fundamentally flaws Lewis' argument (fig.100). Here was a similarly monumental work composed for the private market and replete with the forms of Moore's most transgressive practice, sidled up alongside the Dartington piece enacting their own dialogue.

In the same talk in which he characterised the 'sense of permanent tranquillity' he sought to achieve in the Dartington figure, Moore described the Elmwood piece as expressing:

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<sup>500</sup> Lewis, "Moore and Hepworth", p.505

more disturbing, more violent feelings. And it is these oppositions and contrasts in one's nature that make a whole personality. And the value of such contrasts goes beyond the confines of a single personality."<sup>501</sup>

So too does a reading of the variety of Moore's output in relation to the sphere of educational practice: in its oppositions and contrasts can be found an expression of Moore's complex feelings for that period of reform and renovation.

The problem of comparing Moore's *Memorial Figure* with his shelter drawings or his Madonna only formally is the absence of considerations of their suggested roles. Where Moore's families and wartime mothers confront us head on, sitting up watchfully or looking past us worriedly, to be confronted in the public sphere, the 'aloofness' of his memorial figure might return us to a landscape untouched by the troubles of war: the latter looks hazily backwards, whilst the former look anxiously forwards. It is through an appreciation of the interchange between these works, the back and forth from wartime anxiety to post-war possibility, expressed formally as well as thematically in the given metaphoric resonances, that a composite sense of Moore's attitude might be found. It is in their differences that we might understand the variety of educational models proposed, experimented with and implemented in this period of upheaval.

The role of the Elmhursts in creating a private space for artistic contemplation at Dartington in the pre-war period whilst also providing the means to examine the role of the state and to programmatically work towards an alternative is key to understanding the Dartington figure, not only as an artwork related to that project but also as an embodiment of their wider patronage of and position in relation to the arts and society at a time when the very nature of both was shifting. Margaret Garlake has referred to the work as a "very private sculpture in a public location", and in the Elmhursts' commission of Moore's sculpture for their progressive college that blurred the lines between the public and the private, placing art, creativity and community at the centre of its operations, the work might stand in, simultaneously, for both of the scales of private and public patronage that Moore would be the recipient of in the post-war period.<sup>502</sup> The distinction between the Dartington Memorial Figure and the 1946 Elmwood figure might then read as an analogue for those opposing frameworks inherent in British avant-garde practice which Moore would come to marry so

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<sup>501</sup> Moore, "Sculpture in the Open Air"

<sup>502</sup> Garlake, "Moore's Eclecticism", p.181

effortlessly.<sup>503</sup>

That the headmaster of the Dartington School, William Curry, was asked to contribute to the *Circle* publication is a measure of the interrelation of the British intelligentsia at that time, and the relevance of the Dartington experiment in relation to those discussions.<sup>504</sup> In a letter to Curry, having introduced the concept of the review and its editors, Hepworth wrote:

The editors asked me to write to you to ask if you would contribute something. I was telling them about some of the idea you had expressed to me, + we all felt that your help would be most important. You see we are not interested in personalities, but only in the actual good work done, + its relation to the whole social structure + to life in general.

When I saw you last... you were telling me Dartington differed in this respect from other progressive schools, in so much as it is related directly with contemporary life. We wondered whether you would write us an article about this particular aspect of education; which the editors feel is so important, + upon which I felt you had such constructive ideas, not only ideas but also achievement.<sup>505</sup>

But for the relatively clumsy suggestion of Curry's 'constructive' ideas, Hepworth and her colleagues' identification of the pertinence of the Dartington experiment for inclusion in *Circle* is telling. The experimental and autonomous nature of the school was a direct equivalent of the ambitious modernist thoughts espoused in *Circle*. Indeed, in some ways Dartington might be conceived as a countryside outpost of the Hampstead bubble that existed around the contributors to *Circle*.<sup>506</sup>

Somewhere between the broad ambitions of the *Arts Enquiry* survey into the state of national culture in wartime and the necessarily small and exclusive experiment conducted

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<sup>503</sup> The Elmhirsts' private collection included works by many of the most significant British modernists of this period, suggesting not only their preference and their involvement in the wider artistic avant-garde of their day, but also their desire to support artists both in and outside of the institution they set up for that purpose. Artists included Christopher Wood, Frances Hodgkins, Winifred Nicholson, Ben Nicholson, Henri Gaudier-Brzeska, Eric Gill, David Jones, Graham Sutherland, John Piper, Alfred Wallis and Jacob Epstein, and a work by Henry Moore appears to be one of the very first Dorothy bought. Harrison, *Dorothy Elmhirst*, p.76

<sup>504</sup> It should be noted that the Elmhirsts had also supported Morris' schemes in Cambridge with a substantial amount of capital. Rée, *Educator Extraordinary*, pp.39-42

<sup>505</sup> Letter from Barbara Hepworth to William Curry, July 26<sup>th</sup> 1937, Dartington Hall Trust Archives, Devon Record Office, DWE/A/1/A1/16

<sup>506</sup> As well as the Hepworth-Nicholson, Bernal and Huxley children's attendance there, Gropius also had a part to play, having worked on ideas for an ultimately unresolved design studio there, before managing the final stages of the theatre's conversion. It may have been his work with the Elmhirsts here that convinced them to contribute financially to his work on the Impington Village College. Young, *The Elmhirsts at Dartington*, pp.229-230

at Dartington and in the pages of *Circle* before and during the war can be found an analogue for the range of politically-motivated attempts at socio-cultural and educational reform proposed and worked through in that period. Moore's proximity to these experiments is a mark of his cognition of that breadth. It was to this freedom of expression, and this atmosphere, that Moore's *Memorial Figure* was oriented.

We might productively compare the localised experiment at Dartington to the calls by the likes of Herbert Read for an anarchistically-aligned re-conception of society from the ground up, though the Elmhirsts' pointed involvement with social and economic planning on a national level through the Political and Economic Planning think tank (P.E.P) suggests a less ideologically driven impetus on their part. Theirs was a multi-faceted belief in the need for reform, and a desire to experiment with new methods, in keeping with a broader pattern among the interwar intelligentsia. This is not to say they did not understand the political ramifications of their designs, or understand the theory behind it. As well as holding Dartington up as an exemplar of Kropotkin's ambitions, the anarchist theorist Colin Ward credited Leonard Elmhirst with helping him to re-edit Kropotkin's works in the introduction to a reedited volume of Kropotkin's work in 1998.<sup>507</sup> But equally important to Elmhirst was the influence of Rabindranath Tagore, the poet, cultural reformer and educationalist whom he knew from his time at Cornell University and with whom he worked in India on a project for rural education that was the closest immediate precedent for Dartington. Both would be fundamentally child-centred, rather than politically motivated, and allowed to evolve organically.<sup>508</sup>

Tagore and Elmhirst would collaborate to open the 'Institute for Rural Education', or Siksha-Satra (Seat of Instruction) in the village of Surul, a mile or two from the town of Santiniketan in West Bengal, in the same year that Dartington opened in Devon, and their ambitions were markedly similar. Of the school in Surul, Elmhirst wrote:

The aim, then, of the Siksha-Satra is, through experience in dealing with this overwhelming abundance of child life, its charm and its simplicity, to provide the utmost liberty within surroundings that are filled with creative possibilities, with opportunities for the joy of play that is work – the work of exploration, and of work that is play... to give the child that freedom of growth which the young tree demands for its tender shoot, that field of self-expansion in which all young life

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<sup>507</sup> Colin Ward (ed.), *Peter Kropotkin's Fields, Factories and Workshops Tomorrow* (Freedom Press, London, 1998), p.ix

<sup>508</sup> Young, *The Elmhirsts and Dartington*, pp.75-92

finds both training and happiness.<sup>509</sup>

The four main principles behind the setting up of Dartington, meanwhile, were laid out by Young as follows. The curriculum should stem from “children’s own interests”, learning should be facilitated through activity: “by doing”, “adults should be friends, not authority figures”, and perhaps most pertinently, the school should be a “self-governing commonwealth.”<sup>510</sup>

The openness of these ideas, with the growth of the school predicated on the involvement of its pupils and its growth being gradual and undefined led to the school’s being “difficult for the press and outside world to fit... into any known pigeonhole”, even if this feature of the school “proved to be one of its enduring strengths, stimulating personal involvement and a remarkable degree of individual and institutional productivity.”<sup>511</sup>

Might that be the context where Moore’s *Memorial Figure* is best placed, best understood? Largely removed from broader developments in Moore’s career, this figure stands out as a deeply personal memorial to a friend, and, in its materiality, from and part of the earth, speaks to the changing landscape it sat in.

In his biography of Moore, John Russell wrote definitively that:

The *Memorial Figure* brings to an appropriately elegiac close the series of swathed human figures, drawn or carved, which derive in part from the experience of the shelter and in part from the investigation of pure sculptural form.<sup>512</sup>

Such a synthesis of experience and form might be a suitable description for the role that war memorials are expected to take.

Writing with similar finality, of both the *Memorial Figure* and its opposite, the Elmwood reclining figure, James Johnson Sweeney wrote they were “perhaps Moore’s fullest exemplifications of that quality which he has regarded throughout his career as of fundamental importance: ‘truth to materials’.”<sup>513</sup> That from his essay for the 1947

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<sup>509</sup> Rabindranath Tagore and Leonard Elmhirst, *Rabindranath Tagore, Pioneer in Education* (John Murray, London, 1961), p.68; quoted in Young, *The Elmhirst at Dartington*, pp.83-84. If the Dartington experiment appeared unsuited to elaboration on a national scale in England, no such hesitation held Indian national education back, as the model of Siksha-Satra was rolled out with Gandhi’s support in an “all-India revolution in primary education” that “had an influence over the whole subcontinent.”

<sup>510</sup> Young, *The Elmhirsts at Dartington*, pp.136-140

<sup>511</sup> Cox, *The Arts at Dartington*, p.7

<sup>512</sup> Russell, *Henry Moore*, p.125

<sup>513</sup> James Johnson Sweeney (ed.), *Henry Moore*, exhibition, Museum of Modern Art (New York, 1946-47), pp.86-87.

catalogue of Moore's exhibition at MOMA, a defining moment in Moore's career the year before his receipt of the Golden Lion at the Venice Biennale.

Do these works represent an end point in Moore's work, the result of all his previous experiments and the last major works completed largely by Moore, of his own hands, and before what might be rendered his 'bronze period' began? Do they signal the end of his attention to 'pure sculptural form', and should that be how they are received, as they invariably are?

The work's relation to the Dartington landscape, sat overlooking the grounds from a high vantage point, is central to its function. The swell of the terrain is echoed in the reclining figure's curves, and the flow of her robes similarly redolent of the nature around it (Fig.101). The sculpture's scale, meanwhile, monumental in photos, is dwarfed by its surroundings (Fig.102). Whereas the size of Moore's *Madonna and Child* and his Elmwood reclining figure – both similar in size – are increased by their physical constraint within architectures, this work is subsumed by its context. Unostentatious and dignified, the work appears a fitting memento for his friend and colleague (Fig.103).<sup>514</sup>

With the final chapter in this section of the thesis, I will demonstrate the ways in which Moore's first major bronze for the Barclay School can be seen to continue the artistic dialogue Moore had carried through from his first introduction to the educational schemes for both Senate House and Impington, whilst breaking with his earlier works in order to break with the order which had supported his early career. The variation in technique will be read through Moore's deliberations on the democratic role of public sculpture, encompassing its affordability, its accessibility and its legibility. None of these points are straightforward, but Moore can be seen to be negotiating them, thinking them through in pen, ink, clay and in his own actions before resolving them in materials suitable to their commission. With Moore's turn to bronze came the opportunity to distribute his work far and wide with ease, and thus to share his embodiments of, and his commentaries on, the moments of their creation.

Returning to Moore's conception of the ways the two reclining figures of 1945-46 represented the "oppositions and contrasts in one's nature that make a whole personality", might we think about how these 'oppositions and contrasts' register more effectively the fullest sense of his feelings about the potential of art patronage, of the role of the state,

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<sup>514</sup> In a description of the work sent to Dorothy Elmhirst after its completion, he described the work as having "a quiet stillness and a sense of permanence as though it could stay there forever", quoting his own description of the Madonna's material properties. Harrison, *Dorothy Elmhirst*, p.235

and of the role of private and public patronage at the end of war?<sup>515</sup> One violently charged, forward looking, pregnant and exposed as such, one “stoical as well as sad”, and apparently “reconciled to the inevitability of death” as Richard Cork described the *Memorial Figure*, all of which appears a more fitting tribute to Martin’s life than suggestions of the work’s aloofness.<sup>516</sup>

Cork also suggested that the work might, in part, expose something of Moore’s cognition of personal loss having lost his own mother a year previous.

He never forgot the sight of her lifeless body, explaining long afterward that ‘she had such dignity, such an eternity feeling about her, that to me it was beautiful but terribly, terribly moving... there’s something about a body which is statuesque.’<sup>517</sup>

Here might the shelter drawings, the Madonna, and Moore’s Memorial Figure find their shared heritage, close to death, to destruction, to oblivion, but, recalling Frederick Wright’s description of the shelter drawings having the “Lazarus look”, capable of pulling back from the edge.

Writing a year before Moore’s commission for Dartington, Herbert Read captured something of the prevailing spirit of uncertainty that characterised the final years of the war in England in the introduction to a book concerned with capturing the socio-economic, scientific and cultural moment in England as the war dwindled, commissioned by the editor of World Review, J.R.M. Brumwell.

In the midst of these dark days, when a resurrected and powerful barbarism seems to be trying to sweep away the last remnants of our civilisation, we are to turn to each aspect of our national and international life and examine the crowded scene and the prospects for the future...

We are to ask whether man has the power to reorganise the material conditions of his life – to create the material conditions of his life – to create a reasonable economic system.

We are to ask whether, as an outcome of a new economic order, we may reasonably expect a new flowering of culture in the arts...

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<sup>515</sup> Elsewhere Moore defined them simply as the “tough one” and the “tender one”. David Finn, *Henry Moore: Sculpture and Environment* (Thames and Hudson, London, 1976), p.266; quoted in Wilkinson, *Henry Moore: Writings and Conversations*, p.271

<sup>516</sup> Richard Cork, “An Art of the Open Air”, p.19

<sup>517</sup> Ibid, quoting Henry Moore interview with J Heilpern, *The Observer Magazine*, 30<sup>th</sup> April 1972

We are to ask whether this new order will include new advances in science and philosophy; and finally, we are to ask whether, as a culmination to all these changes, our civilisation will find the spiritual coherence and moral unity which can only be given by a universal religion...

Our world is in ruins: it needs only hard work and perseverance to rebuild it... We are scientists and we believe that we have the skill: we are artists and we believe we have the vision. Let us direct your work and we promise you that out of the ruins a better world will emerge...<sup>518</sup>

Read's essay is among the most emotionally charged that he ever wrote, traversing a line between hope and fear that appears, similarly, in so much of the work Moore produced at this time. His two variants on the reclining form from 1945-46 appear to walk that line too.

Concluding his essay with a look to the future, Read proposed that education

is perhaps the most fundamental revolution of all, but still more has to be done.

The life of the school and the university is still too narrow and pedantic. We must make the school a microcosm of society, so that every child goes out into the world filled not so much with learning as with a sense of human values.

One of our greatest needs – perhaps the greatest of all – is a new conception of the teacher's vocation...

Education for freedom – that is the most exacting of all our tasks.<sup>519</sup>

It was a project that Moore was deeply involved with, and in the implementation of the 1944 Education Act was supposed to be the resolution of some of these questions. In the following chapter, I will discuss the way these plans were implemented, and the relevance of Moore's *Family Group's* realisation in one of the first schools built to respond to those advances.

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<sup>518</sup> Read, "Prologue: Threshold of a New Age" in J.R.M. Brumwell, (ed.), *This Changing World* (Routledge, London, 1944), pp.7-14

<sup>519</sup> Ibid, p.13-14



## 7. Secondary Modernism: *The Family Group* and the 'Hertfordshire Experiment'

The resolution of Moore's *Family Group* project came in 1950 with its unveiling in the forecourt of the Barclay School in Stevenage: an over life-size bronze work composed of a seated mother and father holding a child between them at shoulder height. The work was positioned so as to be passed by children, teachers and parents alike as they entered the school (figs.104, 105 and 106).<sup>520</sup>

The Barclay School was the first co-educational secondary modern school built in Hertfordshire, and among the first number of secondary modern schools built anywhere in the country after the implementation of the 1944 Education Act and according to the school building regulations that followed a year later (fig.107).<sup>521</sup> It was built under the guidance of the county's Chief Education Officer, John Newsom, and was designed by F.R.S Yorke, a central figure in the development of modern architecture in Britain who had been secretary to the MARS architectural group and whose work with Marcel Breuer had been included in *Circle* in 1937.<sup>522</sup>

In a book of 1952, the architect Bruce Martin succinctly described the circumstances after 1944 that gave rise to the first wave of post-war school buildings thus:

Owing to the cessation of building during the war, the rise in the birth rate, the considerable increase in the standards of accommodation and the raising of the school-leaving age, the immediate effect of the Act was to require a great increase in the number of school buildings.

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<sup>520</sup> Unfortunately, the work has since been taken off its plinth and moved indoors at the Barclay School in response to the threat of its theft, suggested by the local police, as described to me in discussions with staff at the Barclay School.

<sup>521</sup> Nikolaus Pevsner, *The Buildings of England: Hertfordshire*, revised. Bridget Cherry (Penguin Books, Harmondsworth, Second Edition, revised 1978), p. 346.

<sup>522</sup> Martin, Nicholson and Gabo, *Circle*, pp.180-183

At the close of the Second World War, therefore, a broad framework for the building of new schools was provided by the Act of 1944. Knowledge of new building methods was available from the increasing application of research to building and industrial problems during the war. New ways of construction were suggested by the resources of war-time industry combined with a great shortage of normal building material, most of which was directed to house construction.<sup>523</sup>

Of course that wartime knowledge built upon pre-war experiments in architecture by many of the architects already discussed. But the particular circumstances in Hertfordshire demanded particularly keen efforts. Between the 1930s and the 1950s the county would experience a 50 percent increase in population, led in part by the advancement of the automotive industry that in turn made possible the legislation of the New Towns Act of 1946. Stevenage was the first New Town put into practice, and the Barclay School one of the earliest manifestations of the council's plans for the growing population.<sup>524</sup>

The finer points of what became known as the 'Hertfordshire Experiment', meanwhile, were facilitated by the shape of the 1944 Education Act.<sup>525</sup> This was described in another review of the early years of post-war school design from 1953 thus:

Another feature of the Act lies not in the powers vested in the Minister, great though these are, but in the scope afforded for imaginative interpretation of its provisions by Local Education Authorities. What they *must* do is clearly defined, but what they *may* do is almost limitless, and subject only to the approval of the Minister.<sup>526</sup>

Hertfordshire was among the most imaginative LEA's to respond to the extent of this potential. But if the particular circumstances in Hertfordshire made such architectural renovation necessary and the conditions of the Act made it possible, it was the characters involved who made it happen.

Newsom developed a pioneering plan for school building that was to prove highly influential on subsequent national policy in collaboration with the Deputy County Architect,

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<sup>523</sup> The age was raised to 15 at first, and then again to 16 in 1947 once sufficient buildings and teachers had been built and trained. Bruce Martin, *School Buildings 1945-1951* (Crosby Lockwood & Son Ltd, London, 1952), p.18

<sup>524</sup> Hertfordshire would be the location of five of the New Towns developed in the post-war period. The others were Hatfield, Hemel Hempstead, Letchworth Garden City and Welwyn Garden City.

<sup>525</sup> Maclure's chapter on the early years of the 'Hertfordshire experiment' is the most reasoned and engaged reading of this short history. Stuart Maclure, *Educational Development and School Building: Aspects of Public Policy 1945-73* (Longman, Harlow, 1984), pp.37-60

<sup>526</sup> J.A. Godfrey and R. Castle Cleary, *School Design and Construction* (The Architectural Press, London, 1953), pp.20-21

Stirrat Johnson-Marshall.<sup>527</sup> Johnson-Marshall had experience of prefabrication in design from his wartime work on operational research, and introduced these ideas into the realm of school building alongside the architect David Medd – with who Johnson-Marshall had worked during wartime – who recalled their role there as “part of a chain in a complete cycle which didn’t repeat but evolved as it went round: policy, thinking, designing, making, using, new policy, rethinking and so on.”<sup>528</sup>

This wide-ranging scheme for school building involved attempting to integrate pedagogical theory with the ideas of pre-war modern architectural practice and the lessons learnt during the war, prioritising modern materials and construction techniques that were adaptable and efficient, and with recourse to the specific requirements that teaching demanded. This was described by Stuart Maclure as “an education-centred philosophy of design” through which architects were asked to “crystalise and articulate ideas about pedagogy which went beyond the superficial thinking of the educators and explored the underlying assumptions.”<sup>529</sup>

The construction of the Barclay School, however, came before this plan came to its most complete realisation in the schools built subsequently by Medd and Johnson-Marshall, in collaboration with numerous others.<sup>530</sup> As such, it might be better understood as an early manifestation of the promise inherent in the scheme traced through from pre-war ideals as yet unresolved to the realities of pre-war circumstances. In David Parker’s review of Newsom’s career, he acknowledged the extent to which the school was “based largely on pre-war concepts of secondary schooling,” and that it “proved far too expensive for such methods to continue.”<sup>531</sup> But Jeremy Melvin, in a review of Yorke’s career, identified Yorke’s unique place in the development of school building across the divide of war, both informing and implementing wide ranging architectural reforms in the public sphere across the divide of the war.<sup>532</sup> It is this that makes the Barclay School significant, as a bridge

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<sup>527</sup> Johnson-Marshall is central to this extension as he was promoted into the Ministry of Education in 1948 after just two years in Hertfordshire.

<sup>528</sup> Robert Elwall, *Building a Better Tomorrow: Architecture in Britain in the 1950s* (John Wiley & Sons, Chichester, 2000), pp.12-13; quoting Saint, *Towards a Social Architecture*, p.21

<sup>529</sup> Maclure, *Educational Development and School Building*, p.ix

<sup>530</sup> Elaine Harwood, “School Buildings and the Architectural Heritage of Childhood: Designing Mid-Twentieth-Century Schools in England”, in Kate Darian Smith and Carla Pascoe (ed.), *Children, Childhood and Cultural Heritage* (Routledge, London, 2003), p.194. Harwood says these architects “formed the nucleus of interest in the design of prefabricated schools in England throughout the 1950s and 1960s”.

<sup>531</sup> David Parker, *John Newsom: A Hertfordshire Educationist* (University of Hertfordshire Press, Hatfield, 2005), p.160

<sup>532</sup> With the firm he set up in 1944, Yorke would go on to design a large number of schools built in the ‘40s and into the ‘50s. Jeremy Melvin, *FRS Yorke and the Evolution of English Modernism* (Wiley-Academy, Chichester, 2003), p.8

between two eras. It is along similar lines that I will consider Moore's *Family Group*.

Of the early thinking behind the scheme, Stuart Maclure has written:

Newsom's own ideas were general rather than specific: he had no desire for school building plans which reflected sectarian or extreme pedagogical views. What he wanted was to involve the teachers in the process, to respect their professional views, to bring the architects into contact with them so that the architects could learn from them what teachers did, rather than simply from what they said they wanted.<sup>533</sup>

It was a direction of thought predicated on a growing acknowledgement in the industry of the benefits of collaboration, and a response to the ethos of 'form follows function'. And though it wasn't directly politically motivated, Newsom sharing Morris' pragmatism, he was certainly radical in his attitude to reform, and he felt closely the injustices represented by the previous educational systems:

he regarded a chief education officer's job as that of creating the circumstances, the environment, in which teachers could work most effectively, and enabling them to make the most of their opportunities.<sup>534</sup>

In doing so, he worked in harmony with the promise of the Education Act which promised further educational enfranchisement and a breaking down of the barriers that prevented access to education previously.

The commission of Moore's family group was the result of Newsom's absolute belief, inherited from Morris and shared with the cultural policy makers who had steered the setting up of CEMA and the Arts Council, in the value of art. Like Morris, he believed that the "child was educated in the whole environment in which he or she was taught, as well as by actual instruction", and was intent on providing not only purposeful and well-designed buildings, but also a stimulating and attractive environment.<sup>535</sup>

Newsom convinced the Hertfordshire authorities to allow him to allocate one third of a per cent of school building budgets for fine art, which he believed would confer prestige on the county, though the preponderance of words written about the scheme suggests that the architectural achievements alone were enough to generate the desired prestige.<sup>536</sup> Robert

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<sup>533</sup> Maclure, *Educational Development and School Building*, p.48

<sup>534</sup> Ibid, p.39

<sup>535</sup> Ibid, p.45

<sup>536</sup> The same drive also led to Newsom spending more modest sums of money in the following years on a collection of contemporary art works to circulate among Hertfordshire's schools. Maclure lists just some of the

Elwall described the schools in Hertfordshire as being, in the period of reconstruction, “where the concept of architecture as social service was most potently expressed.”<sup>537</sup> Ever present in histories of these schools is a commentary on Newsom’s artistic project, with Moore’s sculpture invariably used as the emblematic work thereof even though it was one both one of the earliest commissioned and one of the least appreciated.<sup>538</sup> Yet seldom are any of the commissioned works treated with any depth of analysis.

Similarly, histories of British sculpture in the twentieth century have remained mute on the purposivity of these works produced in the service of the state at mid-century. Any developed consideration of the formal relation of those works – or lack of – to the schools for which they were commissioned remains absent from literature on the period.<sup>539</sup> The works produced in this period are consistently described in terms of this turn to the public sphere, and in relation to that general belief in art’s redemptive qualities that defined the period. But for the most part they do so without suggestion of the works’ relation to, or without comment on the artists’ intentions in the context of the commission at hand.

In an essay of 1981, Richard Calvocoressi made a point of the imbalance between the “revolution” in building technology and the relatively backward language of the equivalent statuary, largely “anthropocentric” in form and “still made in traditional materials.”<sup>540</sup> He wrote:

Reconciling the two became something of a challenge to sculptors and there were conflicting schools of thought as to how this should be done. Some... spoke of ‘humanizing’ mass-produced buildings by furnishing them with sculpture, thus subscribing to the orthodox view that urban sculpture is essentially decorative or ‘architectural’ in function. Others, like Hubert Dalwood and Henry Moore, strongly

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artists collected, a list broadly representative of the British avant-garde as it was recognised at mid-century. The list includes John Minton, John Piper, Ivon Hitchens, Barbara Hepworth, Henry Moore, Julian Trevelyan, Carel Weight, Graham Sutherland and David Jones. Ibid, p.47. It is also significant that Newsom asked for Morris’ support in the matter, who recommended a Cambridgeshire teacher, Audrey Martin, who sat on the Visual Arts Panel of the Arts Enquiry, to be the county’s first Art Organiser. Parker, *John Newsom*, p.63

<sup>537</sup> Elwall, *Building a Better Tomorrow*, p.12

<sup>538</sup> Even with the work having been offered to the county for a ‘nominal fee’, Maclure has written that the local “councillors managed to make an ungracious fuss”, leading to the cancellation of the work’s unveiling ceremony which was to be a “splendid celebration to which luminaries from the art world, led by the later notorious Anthony Blunt, had been invited.” Maclure, *Educational Development and School Building*, p.47

<sup>539</sup> Maclure includes a table listing all the original works of art commissioned for Hertfordshire schools in the short period before Newsom’s arrangement was cancelled due, as was argued, to the lack of available finance. These works included sculptures by George Ehrlich for the Essenden JMI School; Willi Soukop for the Sir James Altham Lower School in Oxhey; Franta Belsky for St. Mary’s Infants School in Buldock; Bernard Meadows for the Bowmansgreen JMI School in London Colney; Reg Butler for the Hatfield Polytechnic and two works by Barbara Hepworth for the St. Albans Girls’ School and the St. Julians Girls’ School, also in St. Albans, respectively.

Maclure, *Educational Development and School Building*, p.58

<sup>540</sup> Calvocoressi, “Public Sculpture in the 1950s”, p.135

objected to the utilitarian 'idea that sculpture can be brought in to provide a kind of veneer of culture to a building'.<sup>541</sup>

But the division he described was a false one, ignorant of the extent to which artists – Moore is a prime example – negotiated the lines between public necessity, stylistic intentionality, and architectural 'functionality'. Calvocoressi falls short of addressing what the grey areas between those points might tell us.

I believe that it is in the dialogues between the buildings and their sculpted works – materially, metaphorically – that a sense of the 'cultural' life of the building might be registered in retrospect. And what remains absent from such renditions of public works that were placed in close relation to modern buildings, irrespective of their materiality, is any semblance of their comparable worth as reflections of their creator's intentions: the artists' feelings about the commissions.

Calvocoressi's invocation of Moore's opinion on the matter is backed up by quoting the sculptor from his 1955 speech 'Sculpture in the Open Air' – an essay he refers to as a "crucial document" – in which Moore frequently turned to the problems of civic locations. Moore opened that talk by returning to what became a much quoted declaration of his architectural ambitions first published in the catalogue to his 1951 retrospective at Tate:

I would rather have a piece of my sculpture put in a landscape, almost any landscape, than in or on the most beautiful building I know.<sup>542</sup>

Having recounted these words, Moore suggested that they remained an efficient summary of his feelings about his sculpture. Like Calvocoressi, many scholars have taken Moore at his word.<sup>543</sup> But aspiration is different from actuality, and the details of his public commissions suggest a desire to transcend the idea of sculpture as either an architectural embellishment or an autonomous unit, working in response to, and in dialogue with, the circumstances of the commissions themselves. Central to this was the context for the commissions, at a time when the state stepped in to provide much needed reconstruction work in the absence of private finance. The same was true of the artistic sphere, and the interrelation between the

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<sup>541</sup> Ibid, p.135. He was quoting Dalwood from a conference on public sculpture in Scotland from 1967, quoted in *The Scotsman*, 14 April 1967

<sup>542</sup> Moore, "Sculpture in the Open Air"; Sylvester (ed.), *Henry Moore*, exhibition (Tate, London, 1951), p.4

<sup>543</sup> Peter Fuller is a notable example of this myopia. He saw Moore's interest in the landscape and his preference for traditional subject matter as a mark of the artist's participation in a "continuing, British, romantic tradition". He considers Moore's sensibility "not only unmodern... [but] in many ways, profoundly anti-modern", and suggests that Moore "seemed to want to turn his back on the modern world", but without any apparent semblance of Moore's constant and clear involvement in – and representation of – the modern world, especially in the '40s. Fuller, "Henry Moore: An English Romantic", p.38

two realms of production is a fundamental mark of the historical conditions that preceded the works at hand.

To subscribe to the contents of Moore's reflections on his public works is frequently to ignore the works themselves. Indeed, a tendency to give Moore's words too much deference has been all too pervasive in the subsequent literature. They were frequently repetitive, formulaic even, and betrayed little of his self-conception.<sup>544</sup> But should we turn to Moore's reflections on his work for public commissions, more helpful might be the following and less reproduced part of that same talk quoted from previously, in a section left out of the edited version of his talk reproduced in both of the publications of his collected writings edited by Philip James and Alan Wilkinson respectively. Here Moore accurately reflects the circumstances leading up to his work on the public commissions discussed in this thesis.

Having defined the differences between his own sculpture and contemporary architectural efforts in the 1920s and early '30s, Moore wrote of the contextual shift that followed:

I think architecture is the poorer for the absence of sculpture and I also think that the sculptor, by not collaborating with the architect, misses opportunities of his work being used socially and being seen by a wider public...

The best architects of my own generation began to think seriously about sculpture in relation to their buildings in the late thirties. And when they came around to it, some were persuaded not to have sculpture *on* a building but *outside* it, in a spatial relation to it. And the beauty of this idea of a spatial relationship is that the sculpture must have its own strong separate identity.<sup>545</sup>

It is both the separate identity of the sculpture and its relation to the context for which it was made that interests me with Moore's *Family Group*.

Of the final form, Richard Cork has written:

Finally installed in the autumn of 1950, it was the first large-scale bronze he had undertaken and the casting proved complicated. Furthermore, he did not feel entirely happy about its proximity to the curved baffle wall near the school's

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<sup>544</sup> This despite the fact that the *Henry Moore Bibliography* compiled exhaustively by Alexander Davis lists 598 entries ascribed to Moore from between 1920 and 1991. Alan Wilkinson suggests this point demonstrates Moore's readiness to discuss his work, contrary to his avowal in 1937 that 'It is a mistake for a sculptor or painter to speak or write very often about his job. It releases tension needed for his work.' Wilkinson, *Henry Moore: Writings and Conversations*, p.12

<sup>545</sup> Moore, "Sculpture in the Open Air"

entrance. Although the architect, FRS Yorke wanted to place it there, the wall prevented viewers from seeing it in the round. As a result, the all-important gesture which binds man and woman from behind, bringing the father's right hand to rest on the wife's shoulder, remained difficult to see.<sup>546</sup>

This critique of the placement of the work was an extension of Moore's own continued thinking on the 'spatial relationship' of his work and its location from that same talk. He wrote:

I realise that from the architect's point of view the position he had decided upon was the proper one. For the baffle-wall played a part in the architecture – it masked an awkward juncture of the building – and without sculpture in front of it, it might have seemed unjustifiable. The fact remains that it is a position that does not allow the Family Group to be, in the full sense of the term, free-standing. We stood it as far away from the wall as possible, but one can only see it from a limited number of views, one cannot get these sudden revelations that occur when one comes upon a sculpture from an unexpected angle.

This notion has been repeated throughout the literature on Moore's family group. Alloway described the work as looking "like a book-end without any books to hold up."<sup>547</sup> But as Margaret Garlake astutely noted, there is in fact "a wide, negotiable space between them [the wall and the sculpture]."<sup>548</sup> This is not to suggest that Moore's reading of the work's placement was wrong. His aspiration for the work's success was prompted by his deep involvement with the work. Rather, it is to suggest that, in fact, the 'all-important gesture which binds man and woman from behind' described by Cork was clearly legible and apparent, and that the work's full three-dimensional presence was discoverable, if only just; on the level of human interaction rather than elevated to the point of artistic grandeur.

It is a small but significant point given that the success of a public work must be predicated on its interaction with its surroundings and, especially in a school environment, its audience: to be ran around, bumped into, jumped on, or ignored and walked past. The sculpture's 'strong, separate identity' was, in this case, furthered through its interaction with the school and its pupils.

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<sup>546</sup> Cork, "An Art of the Open Air", p.19. In the catalogue entry for the sculpture in the same catalogue entry, Susan Compton repeated this point, though both views appear to be based on photographic or anecdotal evidence as agreed by Garlake in the following point.

<sup>547</sup> Alloway, "The Siting of Sculpture", p.1044

<sup>548</sup> Garlake, "Moore's Eclecticisms", p.192n32



Cork continued:

It was a pity, for Moore had by now made every attempt to fuse his family into a cohesive organic whole. Viewed from the front, the legs of both parents lean inwards at an angle decisive enough to acknowledge each other's presence. Their arms are likewise stretched across the group, linked in a mutual willingness to hold the baby in their grasp... their faces are relatively generalised, [and] rejecting the surrealist split which so disturbingly fractures the father's head in one of the early maquettes, Moore opts for bland characterisation in his search for an archetypal images utterly removed from any attempt to provide a contemporary depiction of post-war family life.<sup>549</sup>

As discussed previously, the decision by Moore to exercise that feature of his maquettes which would have been so out of place in a scholastic sculpture was appropriate, as was the alternative. But rather than bland, I find the expression on all three family members representative of an atmosphere that might have pervaded the moments of the works' inception: anticipation marked with an undertow of trepidation. The distortions of the figures, meanwhile, only discoverable in the round, appear to present an astute commentary on the life of the family as it changed throughout the period of the work's development, notwithstanding their scale. Above life size but only just, this group appear about equivalent to life-size as a result of being seated.

The mother relates closely to both the classical figures drawn for the *Senate House* commission and those found throughout Moore's *Shelter Drawings*, but appears removed from the lineage of fecund matriarchs found more generally in his early works; her broad shoulders extend along her neck and into her upper arm to crowd the child, but her stomach recedes, creating a hollow where previously there were frequently bumps and protuberances.

This hollow extends across the sculpture into the midriff of the father who appears even frailer; his elasticated form a far cry from the muscular and proud forms more normal in representations of 'man'. As such, it foreshadows the shape of the few men who would populate his subsequent sculpture; warriors who meekly defend themselves with shields in the face of contemporary warfare or warriors who have already 'fallen', all of whom betray the scars of the inhuman experiences of mid-century.

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<sup>549</sup> Cork, "An Art of the Open Air", p.19

But the work is unambiguously human, more so than most anything else in a career concerned, above all, with figuration. Sat on their plinth at the Barclay School, these figures stand just above the eye line, and the breadth of their shoulders is moderated by very slight perspective, especially seen from below: a child's eye line. And yet there is something else. Moore's attested humanism is purposeful, and intended, but stylistically complex enough to offer more than just a 'family'.

Read wrote:

In the questioning days at the end of the war, there was some talk of a return to 'humanism', and some words of Moore's may have flattered a widespread nostalgia for naturalism. In the event there has been little evidence of such a reaction in Moore's case, and some of the works of this period... are as intransigently super-real or even 'abstract' as anything in his past work.<sup>550</sup>

Whereas this pull-back from the edge of representation is described by Cork as Moore's gesture towards 'archetypal images', I read it as the result of Moore's negotiation of those points described previously by Russell and Beckett, a language caught somewhere

between Picasso's quixotic, humorous and at times barbarous sculptural pieces, Surrealist discontinuity with reality, and the geometric, mechanistic ideology of the Constructivists."<sup>551</sup>

Margaret Garlake has suggested that "'one of the functions of postwar public art was to be the visual, symbolic reinstatement of a sense of community". She writes:

If public art was to be viable in the aftermath of 1945 it would have to develop new forms, functions and meanings, it would have to turn its back on the cataclysm of the previous six years in order to celebrate the future.<sup>552</sup>

With the *Family Group*, the sculpture's intended location was both the physical corollary of that symbolism and the theme representative of the location of a possible future: in reproduction. Its relation to a school that marked a midway point between the legislation for educational reform, based on preconceived ideas thereof, and the realisation of a suitable architecture that would adequately fulfil that promise, is an appropriate point of departure for a reading of Moore's work.

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<sup>550</sup> Herbert Read, "Introduction", in *Henry Moore Volume Two: Sculpture and Drawings 1949-1954* (Percy Lund, Humphries & Company Ltd/A. Zwemmer, London and Bradford, 1955, second edition 1965), pp.ix-x

<sup>551</sup> Beckett and Russell, *Henry Moore: Critical Essays*, p.1

<sup>552</sup> Garlake, *New Art, New World*, p.213

In 1953, the Architects' Journal would review the impact and importance of school design more broadly in the preceding decade thus:

School design could under the guise of 'modern architecture', and littered with smart clichés, have extolled the values of State education, or the authority of the power of the teacher, or the artistic outpourings of some architectural soul bent on self-aggrandisement. Instead, the best of our post-war schools set a pattern, a rhythm of behaviour, for the child, in three dimensions, which emphasized what he should do, and with colour, form, light and space, exercises his power of imagination and appreciation.<sup>553</sup>

It is a reading of educational provision that reads like a rehearsal of the attitudes present throughout *Circle* about the role of design in modern life. As such, it follows that the works which were commissioned as part of the Hertfordshire experiment are worth considering in terms concomitant with the way in which Robert Elwall described the schools that resulted from the same commissioning body: amongst the most potent expressions of the way in which art as social service was rendered at that time.

If the architectural schemes were expected to be a pragmatic resolution of "simple spatial principles, without unnecessary embellishment, that extended to every component of school design in a quest to make a child-centred architecture", Moore's *Family Group* might then be read as a metaphoric extension of the school's perceived function.<sup>554</sup> That it was the product of a long period of gestation underscored from the beginning by the idea of both progressive educational reform and the place of art therein marks it as eminently suitable to stand in for this period of change. However, reading it in this way shifts the "sense of community" invoked by Garlake? Exactly what sort of community are we referring to?

In monographic studies of Moore's work, the significance of the relation between his *Family Group* and both the Impington and Hertfordshire schemes has been consistently remarked upon, and yet largely without further comment on, or conception of the significant differences between those schemes. Only a few passages of writing have elaborated upon this important connection, and each incompletely, demanding elaboration.

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<sup>553</sup> *Architects Journal*, vol 118, 9 July 1953, p.39, quoted in Elwall, *Building a Better Tomorrow*, p.13

<sup>554</sup> Harwood, "School Buildings and the Architectural Heritage of Childhood", p.198

In another essay by Margaret Garlake that specifically addressed Moore's public commissions from the '40s and '50s, she identified Moore's *Family Groups* as reflecting his engagement with a broader movement towards "democratic and communitarian concerns in the early post-war years."<sup>555</sup> But there is insufficient acknowledgement of the roots of that movement. She relates Moore's friendship with figures such as J.M. Richards, the editor of the *Architectural Review* in which had been published the proceedings of a conference of 1946 titled 'In Search of a New Monumentality' to suggest a context for Moore's *Family Group*, treating the work's origins in relation to Impington as mere footnote.<sup>556</sup>

The conference, organised by the architectural historian Gregor Paulsson and including Gropius among its contributors, sought to consider the suitable forms that an architecture reflective of the new post-war order might take. Addressing the conference, Gropius suggested that a new monumentality should be geared towards a "new physical pattern for a higher form of civic life, a pattern characterised *by flexibility for continuous growth and change*". He conceptualised the construction of forms geared to the improvement of civic and community life as central to a "future integrated expression of civic pride", and he suggested, finally, that this would only be achieved "slowly, subconsciously", with education and endeavour key: "learning as doing" as he termed it.<sup>557</sup>

It was not a newly composed argument for Gropius. Rather, it was one reformulated after the war to reflect the opportunity to implement changes on a broad scale that he had been working towards steadily for decades. Noting that sense of development, Andrew Saint wrote:

more than any other modern programme of building, the English schools fulfilled Walter Gropius's ideals about an architecture which should be simple, practical, universal and imaginative.<sup>558</sup>

Implicit in Saint's broad identification of the importance of Gropius' lessons for the modernist movement here is the specific importance of the Impington project: a direct precedent for so much of what came later though one incompletely accounted for. Looking back at the spirit of post-war architectural claims to modernity, Stirrat Johnson-Marshall's brother Percy recalled:

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<sup>555</sup> Garlake, "Moore's Eclecticisms", p.179

<sup>556</sup> *Architectural Review*, 104, 621, p.117

<sup>557</sup> *Ibid*, p.127

<sup>558</sup> Saint, *Towards a Social Architecture*, p.ix

Gropius gave us what we thought was the clue to the problem that had been eluding us... the idea that architecture was for everyone, and that architects should focus their attention not on the rich, with their mansions and banks and clubs, but on the poor, and the large-scale housing, schools and community buildings which flowed from that human objective.<sup>559</sup>

As such, it is important to repeat that Moore's work on the family group project related to both Gropius's work on Impington and the implementation of designs inherited from Gropius: to both Morris and Newsom's pedagogical schemes, and to the field of pedagogical advancement as it stretched across the historical divide of wartime. Locating the sculpture in relation to both pre- and post-war communitarian concerns, and as part of a process of investigation, and moving the emphasis of reconstruction back from 1945 to the pre-war period in which these ideas were grounded shifts the emphasis in Moore's work. It shifts the base of the 'community' to which the family refers.

In an essay published alongside Garlake's, Chris Stephens opened up another avenue through which to consider the post-war significance of Moore's family in a discussion about the background of a much later work, Moore's *Atom Piece/Nuclear Energy* of 1964-66 (fig.108). There, Stephens discusses the relation of Moore's development of the *Atom Piece* to the anti-nuclear movement of the '50s and '60s, and locates the early origins of that movement in relation to the political machinations of the interwar avant-garde who had helped to devise, design, and implement the foundations of post-war reconstruction back in the '30s. Stephens then draws a parallel between this history of progressivism and the concomitant rise of anti-Fascist resistance. By tracing this line of inheritance, Stephens addresses the importance of time and causality on the development of the post-war avant-garde that is central to my reading of Moore's work. In pursuing this line of enquiry, we are best placed to trace the socio-cultural context of this work appropriately, one that pushes against the constraints of historically constructed borders.

Turning to Moore's development of an iconography representative of the politics of his social milieu, Stephens identifies the suitability of the *Family Group* as a "symbol of Britain's post-war political order", and for the "structures and ideologies of the new Welfare State".<sup>560</sup> Careful not to suggest this was Moore's intention, however, Stephens only

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<sup>559</sup> Percy Johnson-Marshall, "Emerging Architectural Ideas", unpublished manuscript, 1983; quoted in Saint, *Towards a Social Architecture*, p.7

<sup>560</sup> Stephens, "Henry Moore's *Atom Piece*", p.250

addresses the convenience of the motif, and relates it to the broader adoption and application of the family motif in post-war British society as an axiomatic metaphor.

That the family came to represent such an important part in the constitution of the post-war social order has been identified as a fundamental mark of the shift in social formulation from pre-to post-war. Edward Shorter defined this as the result of the gradual shift from the 'traditional' to the 'modern' family structure, proposing a disconnect between the traditional, historic model of the family which is tied up with the community of which it was part and the subsequent establishment of the 'nuclear family' model in the post-war period, severing those ties. Shorter presented the nuclear family as an extension of the inward turn towards privacy and insularity inherent in modern society which in turn was underwritten by the advance of market capitalism from the Industrial Revolution on.<sup>561</sup>

In defining the location and the importance of the family in British postwar social policy, Stefania Bernini identified its prominence in political propaganda as a measure of Britain's desire to define its "cultural references and value systems."<sup>562</sup> This, she notes, appeared a direct extension of the suggestions presented by William Beveridge in 1942 to place the traditional family structure at the centre of its welfare model; the blueprint for the Labour party's policies after 1945. In defining the Labour Party's plans, however, she described the extent to which a negotiation of the significant "boundaries between family and state's responsibilities" was central for the success of the Labour party's welfare drive, even after the wave of support that Beveridge's wartime report had been met with.<sup>563</sup>

The potential role of the government in providing support for families outlined by Beveridge was questioned from the right as an "intrusion of the state into the private life of its citizens." In conservative rhetoric, "the family was the citadel of individual freedom and its preservation equalled the defence of liberty within society."<sup>564</sup> But equally untenable was any suggestion of maintaining a status quo that had created the inequalities exposed during wartime.<sup>565</sup> As such, the social life of the 'traditional British family' was positioned

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<sup>561</sup> Edward Shorter, *The Making of the Modern Family* (Collins, London, 1976), p.18; pp.3-21 and 255-268

<sup>562</sup> Stefania Bernini, "The Foundation of Civilised Society: Family and Social Policy in Britain and Italy between 1946 and 1960", in Jürgen Nautz, Paul Ginsborg and Ton Nijhuis (ed.), *The Golden Chain: Family, Civil Society and the State* (Berghahn, Oxford, 2013), pp.144-168

<sup>563</sup> Stefania Bernini, *Family Life and Individual Welfare in Post-war Europe* (Palgrave Macmillan, Basingstoke, 2007), p.36

<sup>564</sup> Bernini, *Family Life*, p.36

<sup>565</sup> It was this that might have pushed the Conservative party to legislate for educational reform before the end of war, implementing changes commensurate with hopes of reform, but ultimately doing little more than implementing policy designed in 1938 which had been put on hold at the outbreak of war, whilst failing to address demands for a radical overhaul in the school curriculum. See Maclure, *Educational Development and*

on the front line of political manoeuvrings in the post-war period, its preservation and promotion essential as a manifestation of British democracy read in opposition to its totalitarian opposite. Beveridge's proposals were thus an explicitly political negotiation of the individual freedoms represented by the family unit and the political safeguards offered by the state which hoped to take on some of the traditional roles of community in a more deliberate and democratic manner.<sup>566</sup>

Talking directly of the expected human results that would be created by New Towns, the Social Development Officer of Stevenage, Charles Madge – co-founder of Mass Observation – said in an interview with BBC radio:

I believe that new towns may very well help a lot to increase average family size, both in themselves and in the standards they met set for other housing development. So when we are planning the houses, gardens, open spaces and communal facilities of the new Stevenage, we have to keep thinking about making the environment favourable for families with young children.<sup>567</sup>

Similarly, in a pamphlet released ahead of the 1950 election, the Labour Party declared their hope for the New Town building as “models of sound architecture and planning [which] will provide all the opportunities for a good community life.”<sup>568</sup> But James Hyman has suggested that it was the realities of the post-war context that make the tight nuclear grouping of Moore's single child *Family Group* so resonant, as even the Government's encouragement of traditional family roles failed to sustain the rise in the early boom in the birth rate that came immediately after war.<sup>569</sup>

Stallabrass reoriented this idea when he suggested that the “autonomous nature of these public depictions of family members” might be read as both an avowal of the work's avant-

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*School Building*, p.1; G.C.T. Giles, *The New School Tie* (Pilot Press, London, 1946), pp.26-32; and Herbert Read, “The Education of Free Men”, *Education For Peace* (Routledge & Kegan Paul, London, 1950), p.114

<sup>566</sup> Bernini discusses the importance of the traditional family unit in Labour party thinking with reference to Michael Young Peter Willmott's important book *Family and Kinship in East London* (Penguin, Harmondsworth, 1967; first published 1957). There, they presented a sociological account of the effects of governmental social policy on the lives of traditional working-class communities after the war. That Young was able to dedicate the book “To Dorothy and Leonard” – the Elmhursts – is a further measure of their importance on his personal development, but it also helps to further define their significant role in the development of social thought in the period.

<sup>567</sup> Charles Madge, “The Social Pattern of a New Town”, *The Listener*, Vol.41, No.1047, 1949, p.268; quoted in Roy Kozlovsky, *The Architecture of Childhood: Children, Modern Architecture and Reconstruction in Postwar England* (Ashgate, Farnham, 2013), p.214. Charles Madge was also on the staff of P.E.P. *The Architectural Review*, vol.104, No.621, September 1948, p105

<sup>568</sup> *Labour and the New Society: A Statement of the Policy and Principles of British Democratic Socialism*, pamphlet (Published by the Labour Party, London, 1950), p.13. On the ambitions of the New Town Act and its successes and failures, see L. Esher, *A Broken Wave: The Rebuilding of England 1940-1980* (Allen Lane, London, 1981)

<sup>569</sup> Hyman, *The Battle for Realism*, p.90

garde status and as an ironic comment on the “self-containment of the nuclear family, characterised as an aesthetic unity.”<sup>570</sup> The ‘autonomous nature’ of the work’s form might indeed be representative of Moore’s avant-garde credentials. The extent to which his works were thought out in relation to a self-defined sense of style and subject-matter is a mark of his individual and developmental working method, and brings us back to the way these figures perambulate between the human and the unhuman/inhumane.

This ‘autonomy’ might then also speak to the private, insular experience of wartime for mothers and their children, as manifest in Moore’s *Shelter Drawings*: these subterranean mothers could be said to have been both formally (in Moore’s art) and literally (in the act of sheltering) removed from context. The way Moore’s drawings for the *Family Group* in 1944 developed out of his extended treatment of the maternal theme is central to the work’s contextual significance, and particularly its re-invocation of the formal experiments discussed in the first section of this thesis.

Positing the irony inherent in this work, meanwhile, might help to illustrate Moore’s subtle identification with the broader sense of community inherent in the commissions for which it was realised. I would suggest that the *Family Group*’s intended presence in the life of a school might then be read as a doubly ironic take on the gradual retraction of the family into isolated personal space, all while being shunted into the democratised field of educational opportunity represented by Morris’s plans and promised by the shape of educational reform after 1944. The inherently democratic spaces of universal education represented a step in the direction of democratic equality.

As late as 1946, upon reviewing the changes proposed by the 1944 Education Act, GCT Giles, long-time member of the National Union of Teachers and its President from 1944-45, wrote

Up to now we have never had in this country even the pretence of a national or democratic system of education. Equality of opportunity, the broad highway from nursery to university, a career open to the talents – these have been and still are largely fine phrases. Our system as it exists now is a caste system reflecting the class divisions of our society.<sup>571</sup>

Reviewing the extent and the promise of the Act, meanwhile, Giles asked a series of open questions that demanded a response if the Act was to prove truly democratic:

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<sup>570</sup> Stallabrass, “The Mother and Child Theme”, p.18

<sup>571</sup> Giles, *The New School Tie*, p. 9



What changes does the Act promise in this out-of-date system? Does it wipe out or at least modify the class discrimination? Does it promise for the average child something better than the disgracefully low standards of the ordinary elementary school? Does it contain any advance towards equality of opportunity?<sup>572</sup>

To answer these questions he turned to the Act itself, quoting clauses 7 and 8 from its legislation thus:

It shall be the duty of the local education authority for every area, so far as their powers extend, to contribute towards the spiritual, moral, mental and physical development of the community by securing that efficient education throughout those stages (primary, secondary, further) shall be available to meet the needs of the population of the area.<sup>573</sup>

But this designation of 'community' as an unfixed concept serving individual populations led to a bill which Giles described as a "great progressive measure", but one that contained "sundry compromises and anomalies." These compromises, he suggested, were a manifestation of the ambitions of a political class that "could not be expected to give up entirely the idea that wealth and social position entitled them to special educational privileges."<sup>574</sup>

The result was the implementation of a tripartite system of state secondary education – of grammar, technical and secondary modern schools – alongside the continued existence of Public Schools, which remained outside the orbit of the State System whilst still being supported financially. Giles, in his capacity as president of the NUT, put forward the union's case for further reform in this area in order to better fulfil the demands for unilateral and equal access to education that had been proposed long before the war.<sup>575</sup> Of the status quo that prevailed in the domain of secondary education, Giles wrote:

It is here that a long history of class distinction, of inequality and of segregation has left the deepest blemishes. It is here that the 'educational pyramid' is most

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<sup>572</sup> Ibid, p.20

<sup>573</sup> Ibid, p.21

<sup>574</sup> Ibid, p.26

<sup>575</sup> Much of the shape of the 1944 Education Act was enunciated in the 1938 'Spens Report', in response to which Ernest Green wrote: "There has been much discussion of these proposals in detail, and an alternative plan, favoured by the TUC and other bodies, and known as the Multilateral School, would mean that all children could pass at 11 to a single secondary school with varied courses to suit all types of ability...The common feature in all these schemes, on which there is now general agreement, is that they should make none but educational distinctions." Green, *Education for a New Society*, p.38

obvious. Public schools, secondary schools, technical schools, modern schools – we have here a regular graded hierarchy.<sup>576</sup>

Giles then quoted from Ernest Green's significant wartime treatise on the desired shape for educational reform to convey something of a sense of the potential of education, as well as to highlight the impact of its inadequacies:

It is only when educational privilege is seen in the light of the social and political power it confers, that the claim for equality of educational opportunity is fully understood. The average citizen has never fully appreciated its importance. He has thought of it in terms of better opportunity for his children than he, himself, enjoyed, as a means to social security or as the means by which he and his children may enjoy their rightful cultural inheritance. It means access to all these things, but it means much more. Its full fruition should lead to making the personnel in the public services and particularly in the key positions, accessible to, and broadly representative of, the common people. The significance of this, on social and political policy, should be obvious. It would mean at least that the aspirations of the common people would be understood, and offer a much more certain guarantee that the will of the majority would be implemented. In short, it is essential to a democratic society.<sup>577</sup>

It appears worth repeating that Moore, as a result of his background and his continued engagement with the public sphere both artistically and politically, was something of a manifestation of this gradual elevation of the 'common people' into positions of influence, made possible through educational opportunity.

Writing about the gender politics of post-war welfare provision, meanwhile, Susan Pedersen has drawn attention to the regressive nature of the Labour party's prioritisation of a traditional family model where women were treated as dependants within a system that positioned the father at the helm of the family, and favoured married couples at the expense of any other form of union. She contrasts this 'male-breadwinner' model with the model developed simultaneously in France which centred its social security policies on the needs of children. She also notices that the thinking behind each country's policies were "as concerned with gender and generation as with class." At the heart of this is the question of the state's role in providing for and securing economic independence for all of its

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<sup>576</sup> Giles, *The New School Tie*, p.70

<sup>577</sup> Green, *Education for a New Society*, pp.107-108; quoted in Giles, *The New School Tie*, p.40

constituents, to be seen in distinction from its role in providing welfare as a measure of social security in line with a policy of economic redistribution. This is not a discussion I have the space to develop further here, but remains an important avenue of thought to be pursued with relation to Moore's addition of the father into the maternal pairing.<sup>578</sup>

The questions to be asked include: how might the father here, withdrawn and remote, speak of this attested paternal authority? Are the abstracted everyman features of this unspecified family representative of Moore's conception of the universality of his concerns, of the push towards equal opportunity? Should we read the 'mutual willingness' of the parents to hold the baby as more closely resembling a 'passing of the baton', the father handing back his first-born to a passive mother? Might this tell us something of Moore's conception of the father's role in all this, which appears far from authoritative? At the heart of these questions might be the reality of the personal lives of British families invoked by Moore, the same families who he had found sheltering underground from the blitz and reading to support their self-improvement (fig.109).

In defining the role of the family as an emblem for a traditional social infrastructure – to be read through its basis in class distinctions – Bernini identified a further contradiction in this theoretical espousal of individual liberties therein, one which sat at the heart of the contradictions inherent in the ideals of post-war reconstruction.

To many post-war observers, the family and the neighbourhood appeared as the most resilient core of those 'working class attitudes' increasingly threatened by the individualistic values of modernity.<sup>579</sup>

This brings us back to Stallabrass' identification of the irony inherent in Moore's *Family Group*, where his sculpture speaks to the negotiation of individual freedoms and collective responsibility, as do the commissions that facilitated it, each underwritten by a sense of the value of free (artistic) expression in both the act of, and the provision for, learning.

The conflict between the modernist march towards individual freedoms and the exigency for a state infrastructure to support the realisation of those freedoms sat at the heart of deliberations over the extent of the welfare state. T.H. Marshall traced the roots of this thinking to the political negotiation of civic rights separated into two domains: class rights

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<sup>578</sup> Susan Pedersen, *Family, Dependence, and the Origins of the Welfare State: Britain and France, 1914-1945* (Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 1993), p.18

<sup>579</sup> Bernini, "The Foundation of Civilised Society", p.

and citizenship rights where “class tends towards hierarchy” and “citizenship tends towards equalization.”<sup>580</sup>

The components of a civilised and cultural life, formerly the monopoly of a few, were brought progressively within the reach of the many.<sup>581</sup>

Roy Kozlovsky, in his work on the ‘architectures of childhood’ in the postwar era also invoked T.H. Marshall in his articulation of the centrality of the child in the physical manifestations of the democratic rights presented by social reform: its buildings. He writes that central to the foundation of welfare politics was the idea that “the child could not be held responsible for being poor”, as a result of which “society was obliged to provide them with the social and economic goods of education, nutrition and health.”<sup>582</sup> This coincidence of education and culture with nutrition and health was central to the ambitions of the 1945 Labour government, and responded directly to Beveridge’s plans.

Alan Sinfield’s work on the changing conditions for the production of literature and culture in the post-war period begins with a rendition of the circumstances during wartime that led to the consolidation of a welfare-capitalist model of society which he describes as “an unprecedentedly ambitious product of state legitimization” supported, guardedly, by both sides of the political divide, albeit one undermined by the insistence on traditional models of the family described by Pedersen, as well as a reluctance to implement reforms commensurate with the public mood for real change.<sup>583</sup>

Sinfield suggests that the earliest signs of reform came in the midst of war as “the requirements of wartime ‘morale’ transformed the relationship between the state and cultural production.”<sup>584</sup> This led to what Aneurin Bevan, the Labour Minister for Health charged with overseeing the implementation of the NHS, described as the restoration of the artist to their “proper relationship with civic life.”<sup>585</sup> Sinfield describes the relationship that came into being between the post-war political order and the cultural life of Britain

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<sup>580</sup> T.H. Marshall, *Citizenship and Social Class* (Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 1950); quoted in Sinfield, *Literature, Politics and Culture*, p.17

<sup>581</sup> Marshall, *Citizenship and Social Class*, p.47

<sup>582</sup> Kozlovsky, *The Architecture of Childhood*, p.23

<sup>583</sup> Sinfield writes that, even with the Labour Party’s reluctance to respond to the popular support for “the continuation of rationing, ‘conscription’ of wealth, nationalisation of land and essential industries, and a school leaving age of 16... [its] manifesto sustained the sense that something radical was going to be done, that a new deal was going to be struck between the people and capital.” Sinfield, pp.14-17, referencing Paul Addison, *The Road to 1945* (Cape, London, 1975); Calder, *The People’s War*; Ralph Miliband, *The State in Capitalist Society* (Weidenfeld, London, 1969)

<sup>584</sup> Sinfield, *Literature, Politics and Culture*, p.53

<sup>585</sup> Aneurin Bevan, *In Place of Fear* (Heinemann, London, 1952), pp.50-51; quoted in Sinfield, *Literature, Politics and Culture*, p.55

thus:

a key assumption of welfare-capitalism was... that the condition of culture is in substantial part a responsibility of the state, and that many intellectuals will be employed in state organizations. Wartime provision was continued with the forming of the Arts Council in 1945 and the BBC Third Programme in 1946; the extension of secondary education through the Butler act of 1944 was understood partly in the same terms. Culture, in welfare-capitalism, is one of the good things (like economic security and health care) that the upper-classes have traditionally enjoyed, and it is now to be available to everyone.<sup>586</sup>

This reconciliation of cultural and educational opportunity and availability is central to my understanding of the works produced by Moore in the brief period of history that I have undertaken to explore in this thesis. But as I wrote in the introduction, it was something of an interregnum period.

The obverse of that cultural shift towards shared availability and enjoyment was suggested by Sinfield when he acknowledges that the system proposed was “sufficient to alarm those who believed the established system to be in their interests”, including in that bracket writers such as Evelyn Waugh who “thought literature depended on a leisured elite.”<sup>587</sup> This was not an idea that went away. Indeed, the place of fine art in relation to its market, and the attestations of artistic freedom in distinction from the overbearing influence of the state would slowly be reformulated backwards in the post-war era in the context of the cold war where state support was tacitly identified with Stalinism, especially after the movement of the art world’s centre to New York and the re-enshrinement of formalism as the basis for artistic experimentation.<sup>588</sup> The influence and effect of the political shifts of the post-war war period is the ground on which Sinfield’s thesis is set out, and although fine art is not, for the most part, part of his thinking, Sinfield acknowledges from the beginning of his discussion a correlation across the arts.<sup>589</sup>

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<sup>586</sup> Sinfield, *Literature, Politics and Culture*, p.56

<sup>587</sup> Ibid, p.18

<sup>588</sup> Sinfield invokes Serge Guilbaut’s work on the American appropriation of modernist ideology here, and it is a useful point of departure. Guilbaut’s discussion encompassed the final years of my investigation, 1946-1951, a period for American art he describes as being “sandwiched between two periods when art was directly and overtly associated with politics... the years between the ‘social art’ of the Depression and the use of Abstract Expressionism as propaganda in the fifties.” That the trajectory of British art, briefly, took a contrary turn to that in America before reconciling itself with what became the de facto shape of international modernism in the ‘50s is central to my reading of Moore’s works produced at that time. Serge Guilbaut, *How New York Stole the Idea of Modern Art: Abstract Expressionism, Freedom, and the Cold War* (The University of Chicago Press, London, 1983); referenced in Sinfield, *Literature, Politics and Culture*, p.116

<sup>589</sup> Sinfield, *Literature, Politics and Culture*, pp.26-43

Moore's avowal of the importance of his – or anyone's – "work being used socially and being seen by a wider public", quoted previously, suggests an implicit identification with the public, with the class of which he was part, and a desire to open his work up to the widest possible public.<sup>590</sup> Similarly, his involvement in politicised exhibitions and on committees demonstrates his involvement in, rather than retraction from, society. As such, his conception of the way in which his work could speak to, and with, its public setting if placed appropriately, is a perfect encapsulation of the interplay between a work's independence and its publics' ability to respond to it.

Meanwhile, the shape of the commissions that brought it about rehearse Gropius' estimation of the state's role in supporting artistic creativity without imposition, which is worth repeating.

... the very most that the State and public authorities can do is to concur intelligently in the initiative which comes from the artists themselves, by supporting, benevolently and wholeheartedly, every attempt to stimulate industry and the public, and especially exhibitions.<sup>591</sup>

The role of the State in providing access to the arts in Britain has been a long-contested question, especially with respect of the place of the Arts Council, the structure of which has been repeatedly reformulated since its inception.<sup>592</sup> But in the early years after the war, it was through public exhibitions that the British government would most successfully and expressively demonstrate its 'cultural values' from the early 1940s on, and in league, to a large extent, with Gropius's hopes for it. If this started with the exhibitions of war art organised by WAAC as well as the more open-ended exhibitions presented by CEMA in its early years, described in the Visual Arts report from the Arts Enquiry as "of a high standard, considering wartime difficulties", and "arranged primarily with an educative purpose," in the postwar period it came increasingly to take on broader significance in the face of coldwar politics.<sup>593</sup> There, Moore became the face of 'Britishness', presented by the British Council internationally, with the family group maquettes – cast in bronze editions of between 5 and 8 enabling Moore to both sell and exhibit his work internationally - frequently representing the most recent of Moore's works; a mark of their suitability to the council's self-conceptualised intent.

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<sup>590</sup> See p.200

<sup>591</sup> Gropius, "Art Education and State", p.239

<sup>592</sup> A worthwhile point of departure here would be Raymond Williams essay on his experience of time spent on the council of the Arts Council, and his conception of its shortcomings and proposals for its reformulation. Raymond Williams, "The Arts Council", *Political Quarterly*, Vol.50, No.2, 1950, pp.157-171

<sup>593</sup> *The Visual Arts*, p.26

In Jennifer Powell's essay on the role of exhibition practice in the construction of the identity of postwar British sculpture, Moore looms large, and she acknowledges early on the extent to which he "was frequently used as a key pawn in games of shifting definitions and symbiotic relationships."<sup>594</sup> Moore was positioned as a father-figure of sorts to the generation that followed him, a number of whom had worked as his assistants early on their career, as he came to represent "the link that automatically implied continuity with the past... a point of departure, but also an invaluable link to a distinctively British past."<sup>595</sup>

Katarzyna Murawska-Muthesius has discussed the particular use of Moore's work in the 'people's democracies' of Eastern Europe, where she defined the issues to be considered in a study of the British Council's use of Moore's work thus:

The role of the British Council in promoting 'Britishness' in a destroyed Europe; the vicissitudes of modernism in post-Second World War Eastern Europe; the issue of culture as a substitute for politics; the dilemma of the autonomy of art versus the political engagement of the artist; the question of 'the human' (or the 'anti-human') in modernism, and finally, the question of art confronting the memory of Holocaust.<sup>596</sup>

As she acknowledges, such a discussion deserves a study all of its own, but Murawska-Muthesius' areas for exploration provide an interesting foil for local responses to the *Family Group* after its unveiling.

One newspaper reporting the Family Group's installation at the Barclay School noted that the figure was considered by local 'townspeople' as "unreal, ugly and not art", quoting one pupil saying "It does not look like any human being I have ever seen" and the local postman's remark "I thought it was something from Belsen Camp."<sup>597</sup> Much is also made of the work's having appeared without warning, as though it were foisted on its public without consultation, concluding

Sculptor Henry Moore declined to say who commissioned the group. "When I designed it I bore in mind that it would be for children", he state (sic).<sup>598</sup>

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<sup>594</sup> Jennifer Powell, "A Coherent, National 'School' of Sculpture? Constructing Post-War New British Sculpture Through Exhibition Practices", *The Sculpture Journal*, Vol. 21, No. 2, 2012, p. 37

<sup>595</sup> Ibid, p.48

<sup>596</sup> Katarzyna Murawska-Muthesius, "Dreams of the Sleeping Beauty: Henry Moore in Polish Art Criticism and Media, Post-1945", *Henry Moore: Critical Essays*, pp.195-220; see also Lichtenstern, *Henry Moore: Work – Theory – Impact*, pp.285-403

<sup>597</sup> Anon., "'Belsen' Statue Came in the Night", *Daily Dispatch*, 3 November 1950, HMF archive

<sup>598</sup> Ibid

Moore's conception is vindicated in another article from the Daily Express which conveyed a range of responses to the work more productively, displaying the innate plastic sensibilities of two young students particularly worth noting.

'Impressive', said Jean Deamer, aged 13. 'I don't like the faces but they go well with the figures'.

'It fits in well with the school', said Gwen Panter, also 13. (fig.110)<sup>599</sup>

Though brief, these responses offer as much as the larger part of the subsequent historicism of this work has been able to.

In conception of the difference between his public and private works, Stallabrass wrote:

Moore was seen to have a double aspect, a manner for small private works, and a grander, public voice. His statements on the public stage were validated by his depiction of the incidents and emotions of his private family life. The distinction was well recognised: it was one of scale, obviously, but more pertinently of material, technique and feeling. The private pieces are more often made of bronze and (obviously) modelled, the public pieces of stone and carved; the private works are concerned with gesture, incident and personal contact; the public works are more self-contained and monumental.<sup>600</sup>

It is this crossover between the public and the private in Moore's recourse to, and consecration of the 'incidents' of private life that marks his *Family Group's* suitability to the moment and the facts of its completion.

Were we to take 'modernity' as the platform for Moore's early career when his works were produced free of wont, but sustained by his work as a teacher and tutor, it seems appropriate that the work which forecast his movement into the public sphere was presented in a form representative of the social shift that accompanied its genesis, and resolved for an educational establishment. There we might return to Stephens' identification of the suitability of Moore's work – a "symbol of Britain's post-war political order" and a totem to its commission as much as those it provided for.

Addressing the place of the contemporary artist in post-war society c.1945, Henry Morris presented the current climate as a culmination of decades of thought on the matter, but dictated fundamentally by the financial circumstances of wartime that had "wiped out the

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<sup>599</sup> Anon., "Now Its Modern Art in the Quad, but Peter Prefers an Apple", *Daily Express*, 26 September 1950. HMF archive

<sup>600</sup> Stallabrass, "The Mother and Child Theme", p.17



small rich influential class of private patrons, through whom pictorial art flourished from the late eighteenth century.” Recounting the place of the artist in design, decoration and the fine arts, he declared:

What we have to do is to relate the artist in a realistic way to the living community, and at the same time to enable that community to become acquainted with the artist, to know him and to accept him as easily as they do the doctor or the technician. This is the best way, if it could be brought about, to give the artist occasions for creation and at the same time give the members of the community of most natural opportunity of appreciating the work of the artists.<sup>601</sup>

With the *Family Group*, I believe, the spirit of this ambition was accomplished, and the promise of Morris’ early efforts was brought to fruition, just as the Barclay School represented a step in the same direction.

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<sup>601</sup> Henry Morris, “The Contemporary Artist and the Community”, quoted in Dorothy Bimrose, *A Matter Done: An Account of the Digsweil Arts Trust* (unpublished manuscript, National Art Library collection)

## Conclusion

On two sides of a page detached from its sketchbook and subsequently given to the Art Gallery of Ontario in 1974 – suggesting its significance to Moore at least – the artist jotted a series of ideas that record his conception of his work's function whilst anticipating a number of subsequent works including, significantly, the earliest maquettes for the Madonna and Child commission (figs.111 and 112).<sup>602</sup> On the recto of that page dated 1935 is written "Symbolic /Humanitarian Ideas / Theme", and on the verso:

Both for grown ups & children - & anyhow in time the children  
will grow up, though its ~~real~~ children (not having fixed opinions) are likely to accept &  
respond  
directly to a new conception ~~before~~ than adults ~~will~~.<sup>603</sup>

As is frequently the case in Moore's notebook scribbles it's a muddled statement, but the suggestion is clear. Moore was thinking about the legibility of his work for varied audiences, and of the suitability of his works on the theme of familial relationships as universal subjects open to interpretation. The passage also suggests Moore's tacit acknowledgement of the life of a sculpture; of the passage of time as a constituent part of his sculptures' meaning.

That these suggestions came in the middle of the '30s when Moore's sculptural output was at its most abstract is a mark of both his insistent investigation of natural form and his persistent recognition of the value of his work beyond the finite audience of the modernist avant-garde.

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<sup>602</sup> The works suggested are MOMA's *Two Forms* (LH153), *Square Form* (LH168) which was published in 'Circle', *Mother and Child* (LH165) and the first two maquettes for the Madonna and Child commission (LH215 and 216).

<sup>603</sup> HMF1135

Writing on Moore's work in this period, and with specific reference to two of the works referenced on the page quoted from, Sylvester identified how

the fragments of the human figure became gradually less conspicuous in Moore's vocabulary of forms, which remained, nevertheless, far more dependent on nature than geometry...

even the works most dehumanised in form... were not dehumanised in content. Shapes drawn from the inanimate world served to express human emotions by means of plastic analogies with psychological processes and constellations.<sup>604</sup>

To support his point, Sylvester quoted Moore's essay 'the sculptor speaks' from 1937:

My sculpture is becoming less representational, less an outward visual copy, and so what some people would call more abstract; but only because I believe in that way I can present the human psychological content of my work with the greatest directness and intensity.<sup>605</sup>

Sylvester's concern with Moore's expression of inner-worlds certainly found its corollary in this passage by Moore, but in the scribbled notes I began with might be found, rather, Moore's apparent conception of the outer-world to which he was at least in part attuned: his publics, for which the more representational formal approach was better suited. By the time Moore wrote 'the sculptor speaks' it is likely he had, in fact, begun to turn back towards the 'visual copy' in his early conception of the suitable forms for either one or both of the Senate House and Impington commissions.

With this thesis, I have attempted to trace Moore's turn to public works through the prism of his education in order to contextualise the evolution of his formal approach, and thus to appreciate his conception of the role of education and of art in the social and political reforms of the '40s.

My purpose in doing so has been underwritten by a sense of the relative lack in even the social histories of Moore's career which have largely failed to appreciate the historical circumstances that allowed for and directed his career. This is in part directed by my palpable awareness of the freedoms fought for over the past two centuries that preceded and enabled my access to a largely affordable education, not to mention the role of

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<sup>604</sup> A.D.B. Sylvester, "The Evolution of Henry Moore's Sculpture I", *The Burlington Magazine*, Vol. 90, No. 543 (June 1948), p.160

<sup>605</sup> Moore, "The Sculptor Speaks", p.340

circumstance in my own receipt of private and public sponsorship in the pursuit of that education.

In the paper Moore delivered to UNESCO in 1952 concerned with locating the artist's place in post-war society, Moore protested:

It is usually assumed that if sufficient commissions were forthcoming from public authorities, all would be well with the arts. It is an assumption that takes no account of the fact that the tradition of modern art is an individualistic one, a craft tradition passing from artist to artist.<sup>606</sup>

This, it seems, is the true dichotomy at the heart of Moore's public works from the period of my investigation, and around which much of this discussion has been centred; the interchange between an artist's personal concerns and those of his patrons, in the midst of which might be found Moore's attitude to the commissions he accepted.

Having identified his problem with public commissions, Moore then delivered a warning shot about the authoritarian influence of state patronage "beyond the Iron curtain" which by 1952 reflected a newly formulated cold war paranoia:

We have to choose between a tradition which allows the artist to develop his own world of formal inventions, to express his own vision and sense of reality; and one which requires the artist to conform to an orthodoxy, to express a doctrinaire interpretation of reality.<sup>607</sup>

Yet elsewhere in the very same talk he linked that which he refers to as the "craft tradition" with that which he identifies as a medieval system of patronage, one in which the artist was intimately connected to his community: "a member of that society with a definite place and a definite function."<sup>608</sup>

In practice, what most closely resembled the place of the arts as they were defined by the immediate post-war context was a middle ground comparable to Stallabrass's guarded interpretation of the expectations of Moore, with the power of the state extended to provide a service geared towards the benefit of everyone and underlined by concepts of brotherhood and of community, yet one which supported and indeed encouraged artistic autonomy and experimentation.<sup>609</sup> The period of my investigation might be identifiable as

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<sup>606</sup> Moore, "The Sculptor in Modern Society", p. 99

<sup>607</sup> Ibid, pp. 99-100

<sup>608</sup> Ibid, p. 97

<sup>609</sup> See pp.32-33

the location of a shift in artistic patronage and purpose as fundamental as that which changed socially as a result of the welfare state.

The success of a public work lies in its reconciliation of these opposing forces, and with this thesis I have explored Moore's development of familial themes towards commissions with different purposes in order to account for the way he negotiated their demands in the years of my investigation to produce works that speak figuratively of the broad nature of educational provision as it existed.

By excavating the ways Moore practised, adapted, and employed stylistic tropes towards these commissions, I hope to have defined the performativity of the works whilst accounting for the nature of the visual cultures that Moore relied upon. Doing so has enabled me to draw attention to Moore's engagement with art histories, through which I have begun to pick apart the implications of the multi-referentiality that Moore played with in the context of – and in direct relation to – the experience of war and its aftermath.

Writing for the catalogue to Moore's first public show in Paris in 1949, Read wrote:

It is of this traditional element in art, found in all epochs and all schools, that Moore is a humble and fervent admirer. Maybe this is what, in an age of eclecticism, accounts for the revolutionary meaning of his art.<sup>610</sup>

He developed this idea further in the final pages of his 1965 biography of Moore:

The social relevance of Henry Moore's work, in an age that invented the doctrines of socialist realism, has sometimes been questioned, but only by people who are either blinded by political prejudices or insensitive to significant form. It did not really need the occasion of war and the making of the Shelter Drawings to reveal Moore's humanity; that quality has been present in his work from the beginning. Only a humanist, a man concerned for the human condition, could have drawn the early life studies; only a humanist could have conceived and carved the Northampton *Madonna and Child*, or the many subsequent family groups and reclining figures...

... we have seen how Moore's archetypal motives... are echoes of the most powerful creation of the art of earlier ages. Some of the works, in prehistoric art, in tribal art, in the art of Sumer or Egypt, do not differ in their essential forms from Henry Moore's archetypal forms, and from this point of view it could be maintained

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<sup>610</sup> Herbert Read (ed.), *Henry Moore*, exhibition (Musée National d'Art Moderne, Paris, 1949), translated from the French by Julia Kelly, "The Unfamiliar Figure", p.62

that Moore is more traditional than the average academic artist. His originality does not lie in his motives, nor even in the aesthetic significance of his forms – in these respects he is a traditionalist. His originality is rather a consequence of his having extended the whole concept of tradition – of having reformed the links in the Great Chain of Being that had been broken by a materialistic conception of life and art.<sup>611</sup>

It is perhaps Read's most perceptive and least prejudicial comment on Moore, rendered formally yet without insinuations of inevitability, and traced through a historical continuum which is intrinsically the result of one's education despite Read's invocation of a Jungian frame of reference. What is more, Read's casting of Moore's work as an antidote to a 'materialistic conception of life and art', and his doing so with direct reference to both Moore's *Madonna* and his *Family Groups* presents a version of Moore's career oriented around his public presence. The emphasis is on Moore's historical value, read in distinction from proclamations of his avant-garde-ness.

Enunciating the terms by which histories are written as a wily combination of both fact and fiction, Alan Sinfield wrote:

The stories through which we make sense of ourselves are everywhere. In the media, they are not just in the articles and programmes labelled 'fiction' and 'drama', but in those on current affairs, sport, party politics, science, religion, the arts, and those specified as education and for children...<sup>612</sup>

In Moore's negotiation of a path between most all of these spheres with a work at once candid and cautionary, inclusive and divisive, real and surreal, Moore created a version of ourselves (the British people) in late 1940s Britain that speaks to a historical moment of horror, of humanism, and of hope sufficiently complete in its unuttered inferences to not need any further writing. It continues to exist as a monument to that moment.

But it also talks of a wider history of humanity. In its scattergun referencing, its cross-cultural appropriation, its invocation of the past and of the present in both stylistic and semiotic ways, Moore's work of the 1940s talks about that period in a manner appropriate to both its historical specificity and its lineage in the theatre of mankind. I hope that in writing about that history and presenting it anew at a time when the hope of that moment appears in jeopardy that I might rekindle something, momentarily, in my reader, about the

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<sup>611</sup> Read, *Henry Moore: A Study*, pp.257-259.

<sup>612</sup> Sinfield, *Literature, Politics and Culture in Postwar Britain*, p.27

worth of education and of art and of a broad belief in the capacity of a purposefully directed and informed state to provide for the many, not the few.

*Education in the future must be a process of gradually widening horizons, from the family to the local community, from the community to the nation, and from the nation to the world.*

White Paper on Educational Reconstruction, 1943



## Illustrations

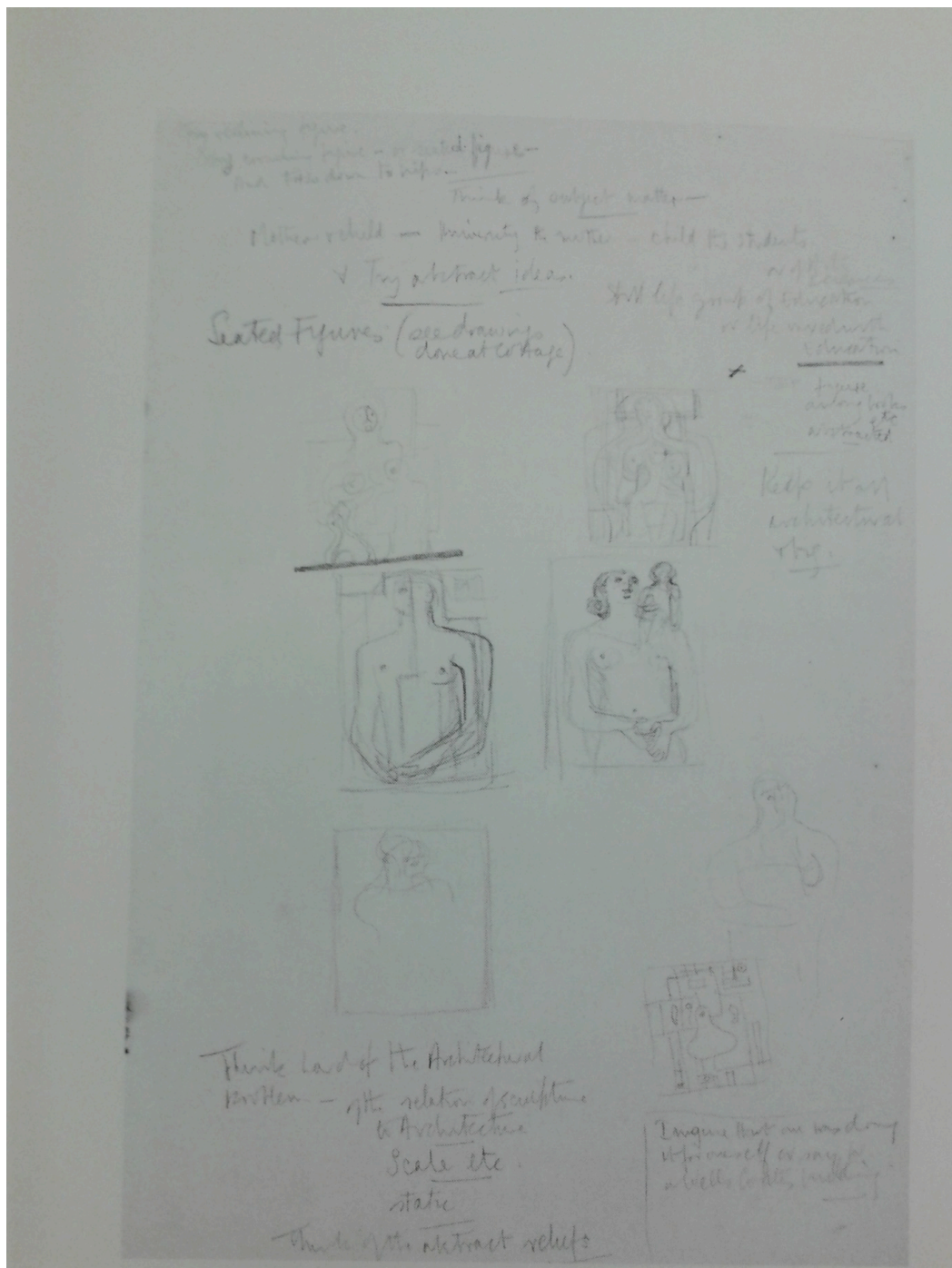


Fig.1 Ideas for Sculpture: Senate Building, London University, 1938, HMF1418 recto

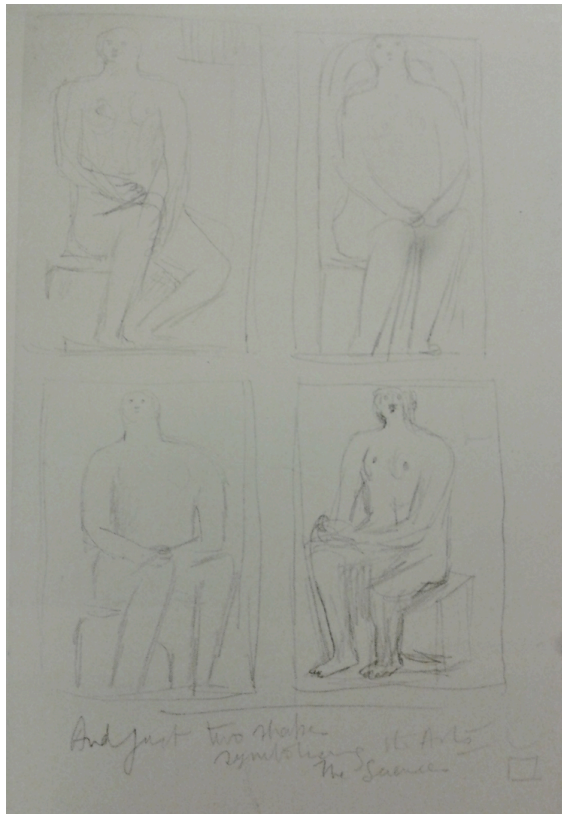


Fig.2 *Ideas for Sculpture: Senate Building, London University, 1938, HMF1418 verso*



Fig.3 *Ideas for Sculpture, 1938, HMF1419 recto*



Fig.4 *Ideas for Sculpture*, 1938, HMF1419 verso



Fig.5 *Nine Ideas for Sculpture*, 1938, HMF1420 recto





Fig.6 *Studies for University Relief Carvings*, 1938, HMF1423 verso

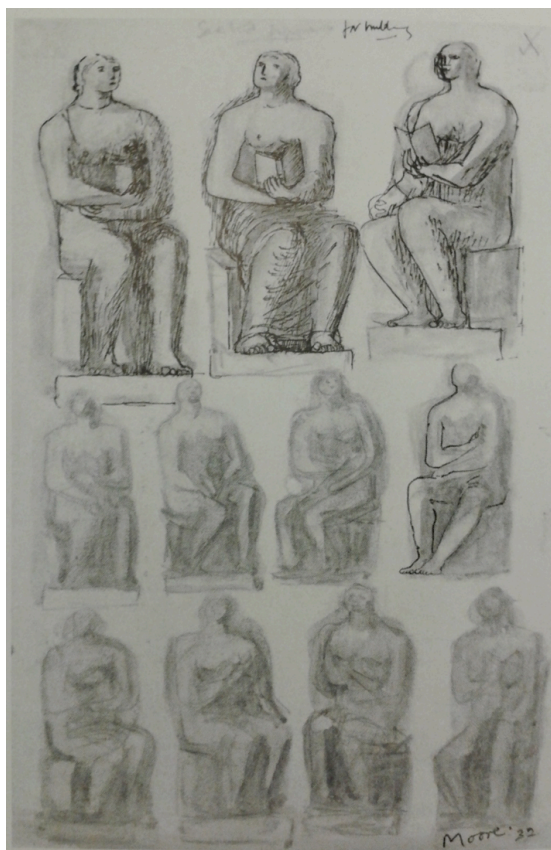
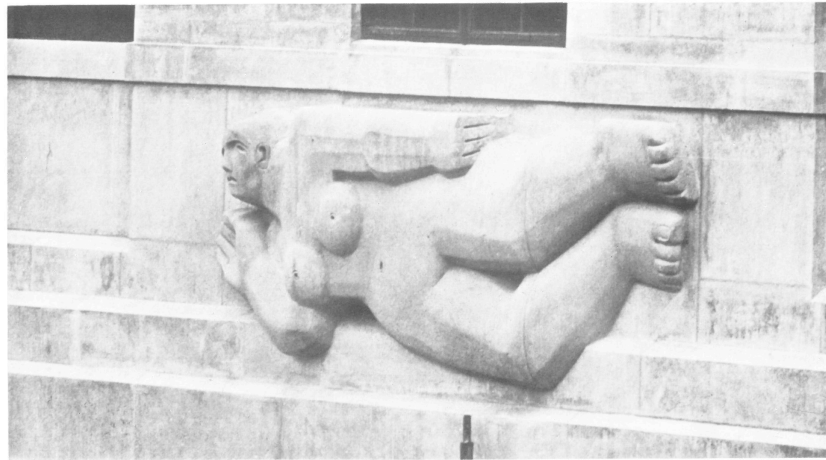


Fig.7 *Studies for Sculpture*, 1938, HMF1424a



Fig.8 Projects for Relief Sculpture on London University, 1938, HMF1424



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Fig.9 *West Wind*, 1928-29, LH58





Fig.10 The North-East Wing of Charles Holden's *Senate House, University of London*, 1932-37



Fig. 11 Jacob Epstein, *Night*, 1928



Fig.12 *Seated Figure*, 1934, HMF1047



Fig.13 *Group of Branchides*, 570 – 560BC





Fig.14 Charles Holden's *Senate House* nearing completion, 1937



Figs. 15 and 16 The South and North facades of Charles Holden's *Senate House*, *University of London*, 1932-37

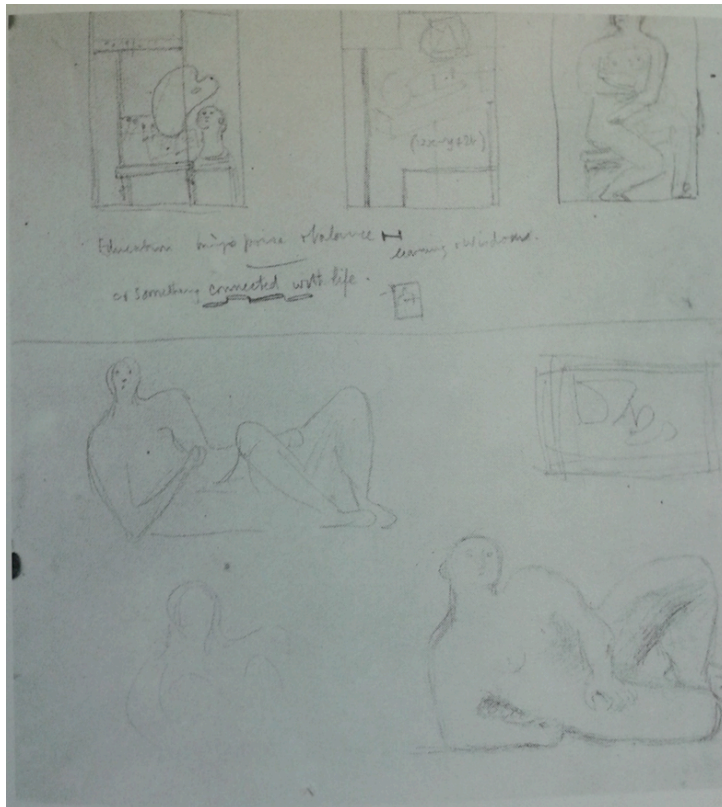


Fig.17 *Six Studies of a Woman in a Chair*, 1935, HMF1183 verso



Fig.18 *Ideas for Sculpture*, 1935, HMF1188





Figs.19 and 20 *Reclining Figure*, 1935, HMF1189 recto and verso

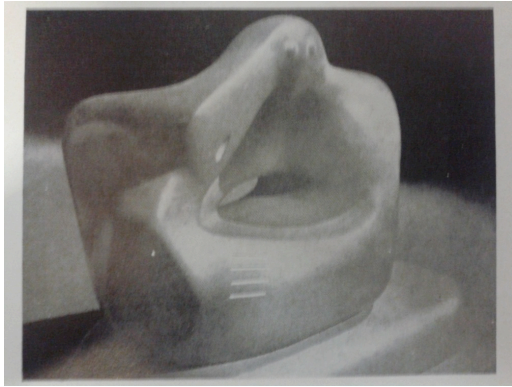


Fig.21 *Composition*, 1933, LH131



Fig.22 *Composition*, 1931, LH102



Fig.23 *Reclining Figure*, 1933, LH134

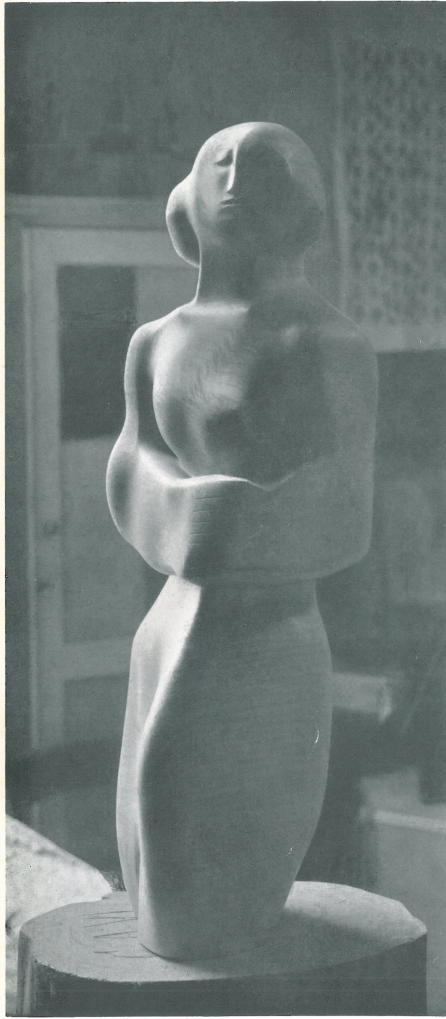


Fig.24 Barbara Hepworth, *Figure*, 1931



Fig.25 Pablo Picasso, *Large Bather*, 1921



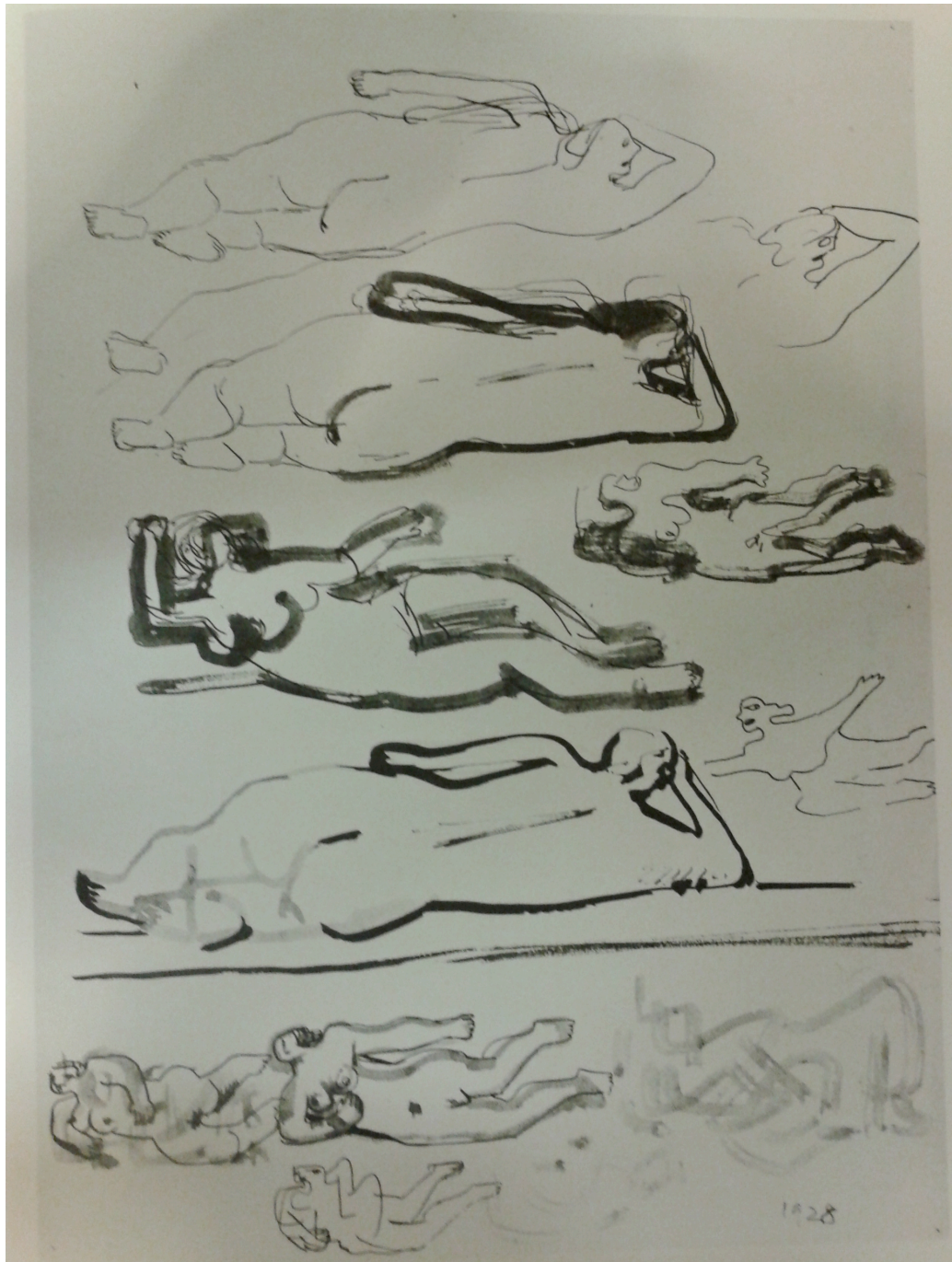


Fig.26 Ideas for 'North Wind' Sculpture, 1928, HMF646









Fig.28 *Seated Figures and Pointed Forms*, 1939, HMF1497



Fig.29 *Standing Figures*, 1940, HMF1539



Fig.30 *Devastated Buildings and Underground Platform Scene*, 1940, HMF1562



Fig.31 *Spanish Prisoner*, 1939, HMF1464





Fig.32 *Maquette for Madonna and Child*, 1943, LH222



Fig.33 *Women and Children in the Tube*, 1940, HMF1726



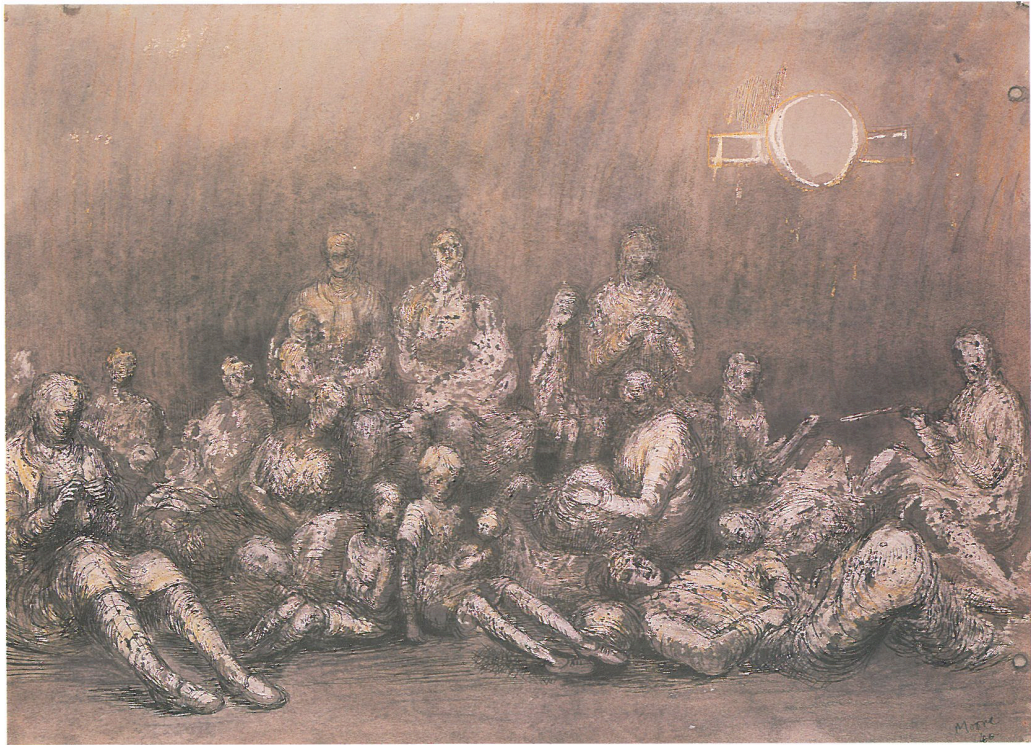


Fig.34 *Grey Tube Shelter*, 1940, HMF1724



Fig.35 *Shelterers in the Tube*, 1941, HMF1797





Fig.36 *Woman Seated in the Underground*, 1941, HMF1828



Fig.37 *Andrea Mantegna, The Introduction of the Cult of Cybele at Rome*, 1505-06



Fig.38 *Eighteen Ideas for War Drawings*, 1940, HMF1553



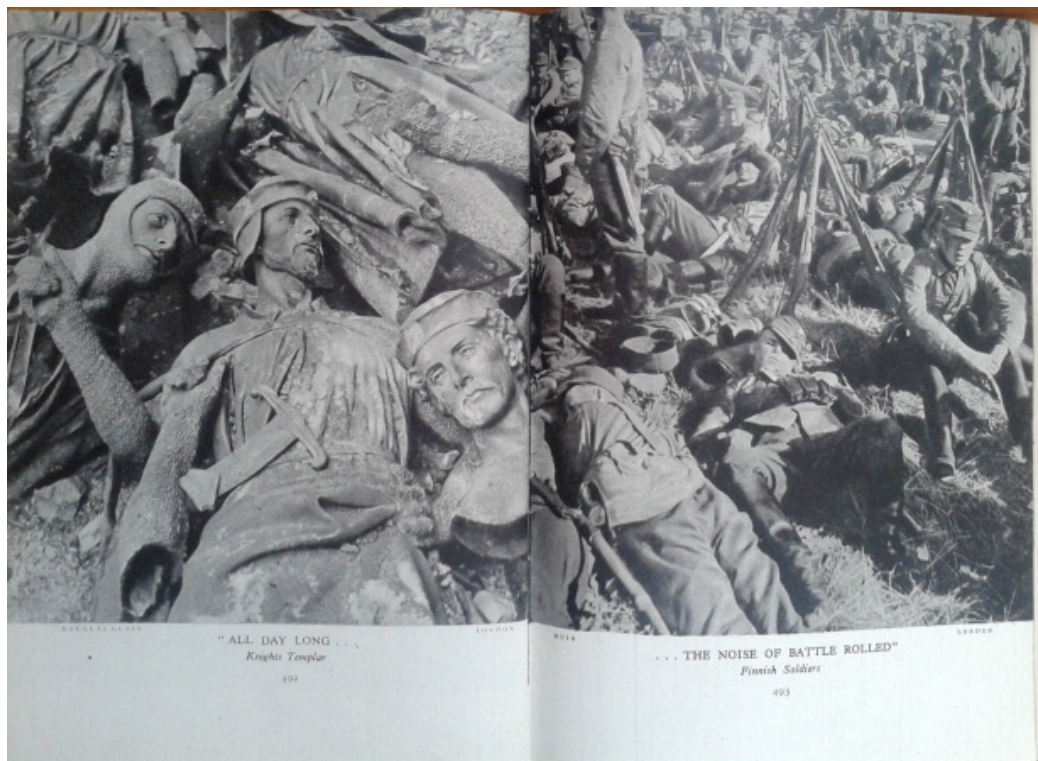


Fig.39 Knight's Templar. Photograph: Douglas Glass / Finnish Soldiers. Photograph: Muir

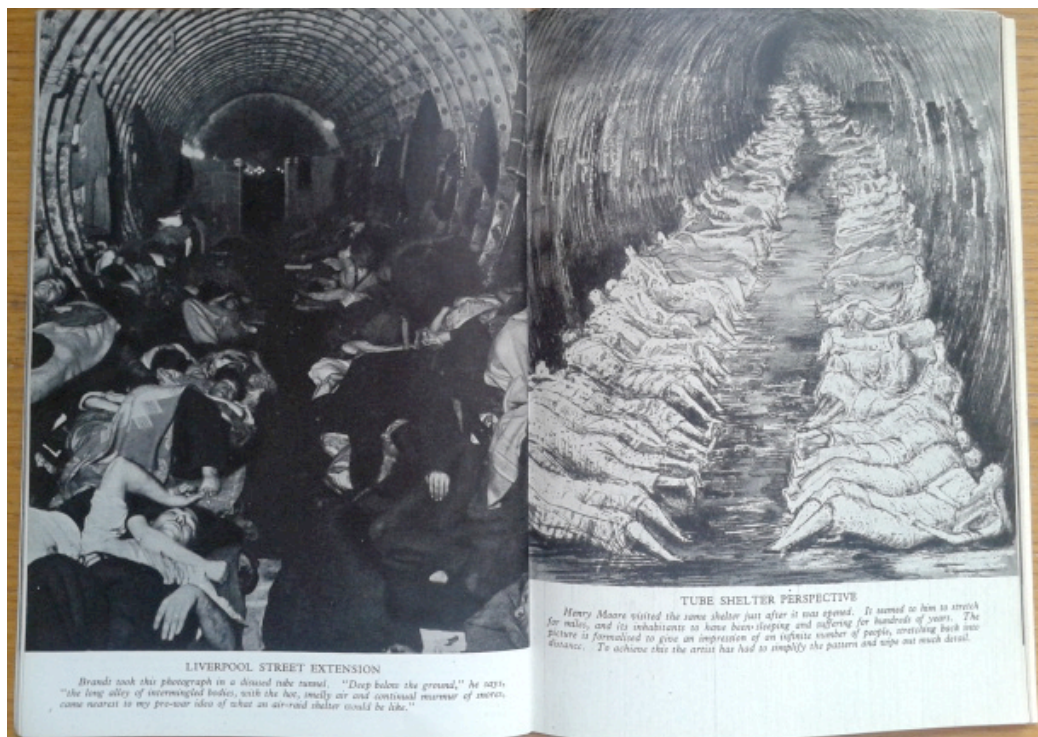


Fig.40 Brandt: *Liverpool Street Extension* / Moore: *Tube Shelter Perspective*



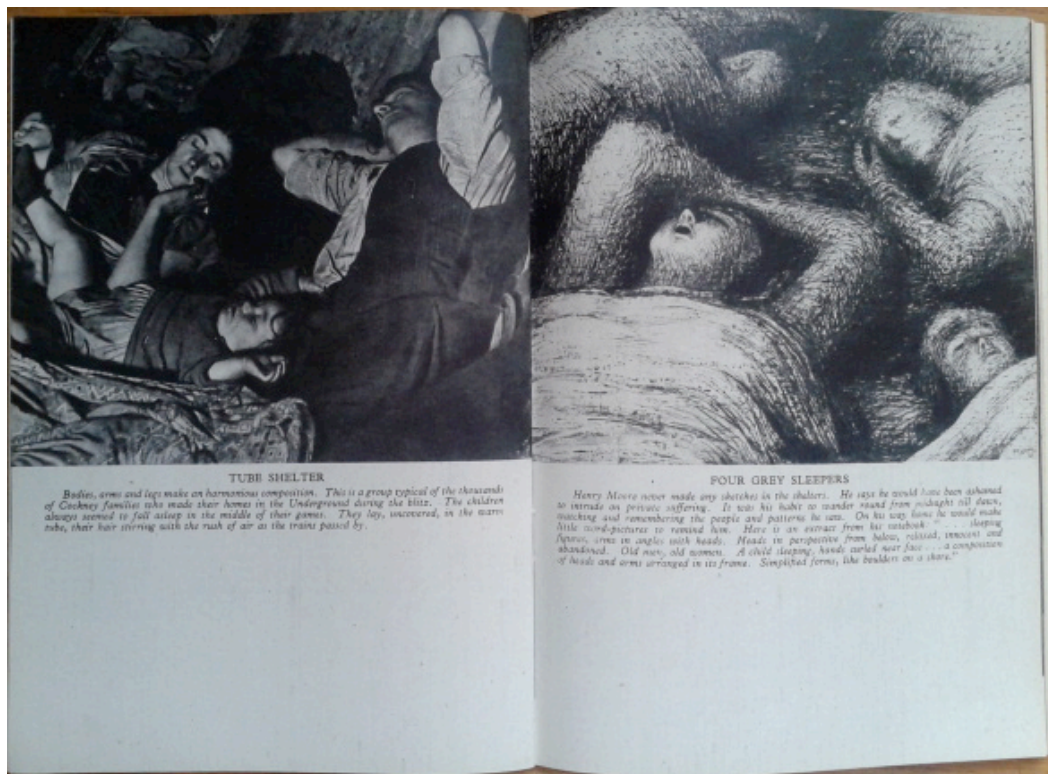


Fig.41 Brandt: *Tube Shelter* / Moore: *Four Grey Sleepers*

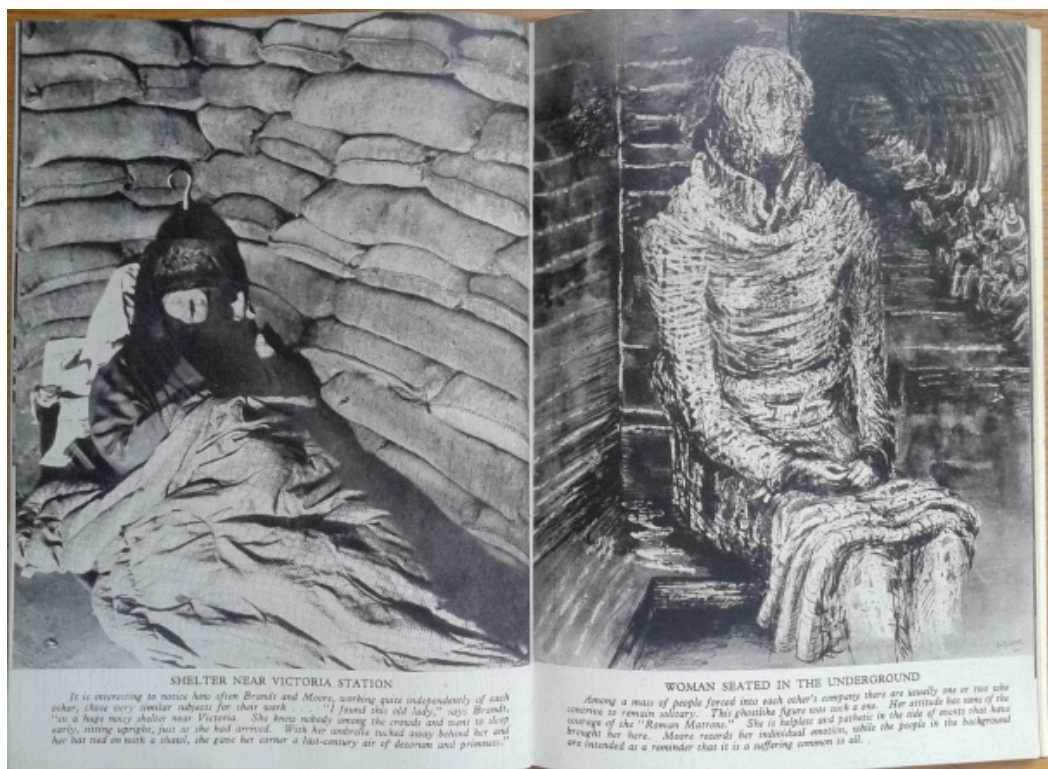


Fig.42 Brandt: *Shelter Near Victoria Station* / Moore: *Woman Seated in the Underground*



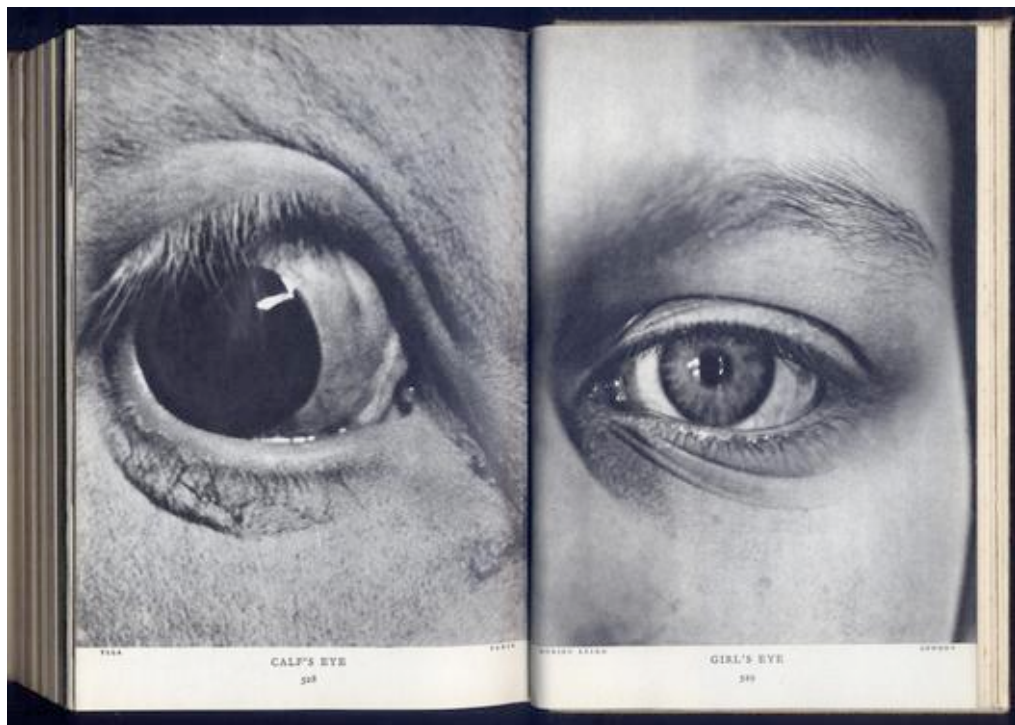


Fig.43 Calf's eye. Photograph: Ylla (Camilla Koffler) / Girl's eye. Photograph: Dorien Leigh

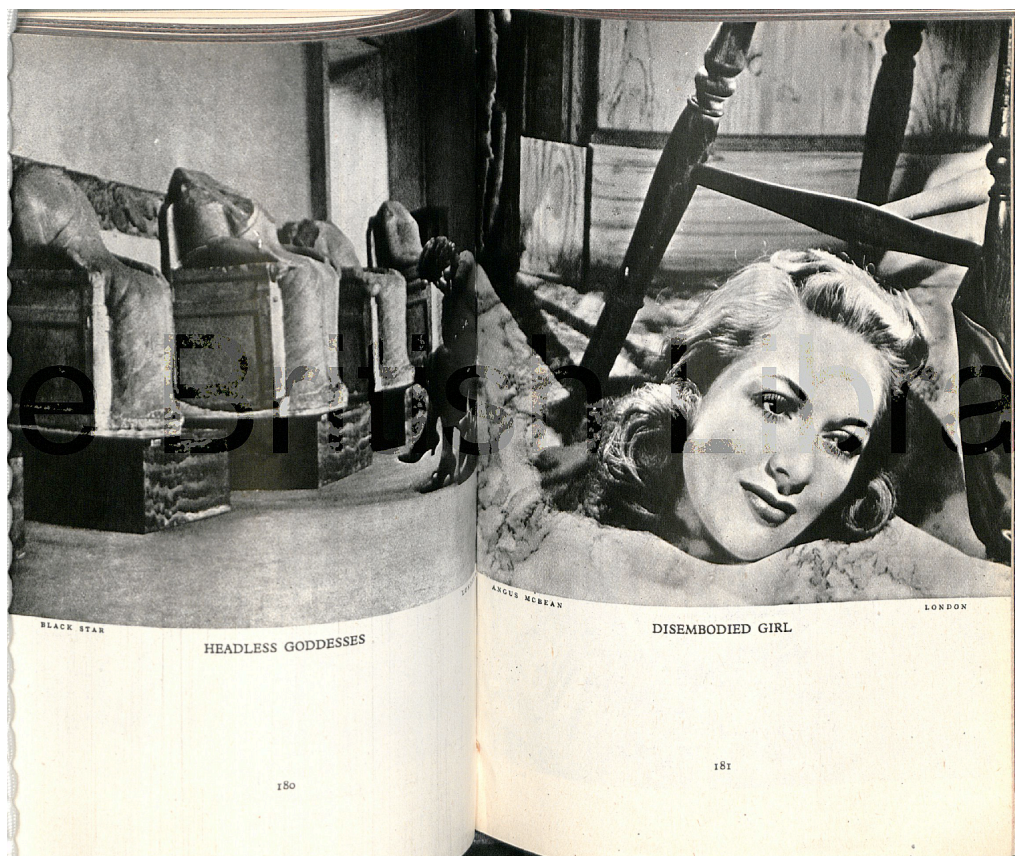


Fig.44 *Headless Goddesses*. Photograph: Black Star Agency / *Disembodied Girl*. Photograph: Angus McBean



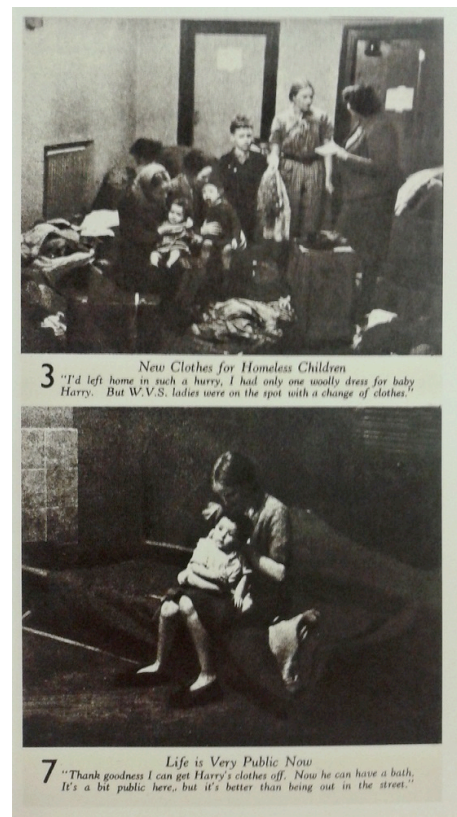


Fig.45 'One of the Great Artists of our Day – Henry Moore in his Studio'

Fig.46 Two photographs from 'Bombed Out', *Picture Post*, 12 October 1940,



Fig.47 *Madonna and Child*, 1943-44, LH226

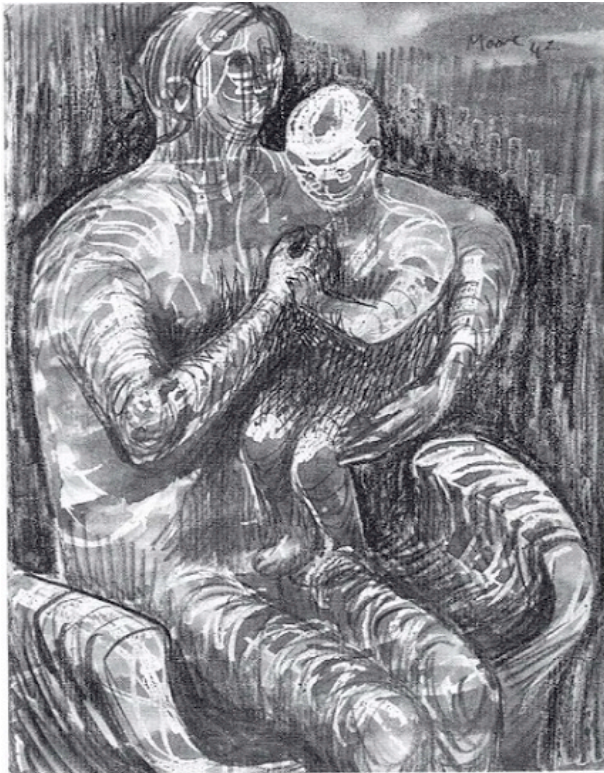


Fig.48 *Madonna and Child*, 1943, HMF2172



Fig.49 *Madonna and Child*, 1943, HMF2174





Fig.50 *Madonna and Child*, 1943, HMF2175



Fig.51 *Madonna and Child Studies*, 1943, HMF2175b



Fig.52 *Madonna and Child Studies*, 1943, HMF2177



Fig.53 *Madonna and Child Studies*, 1943, HMF2178



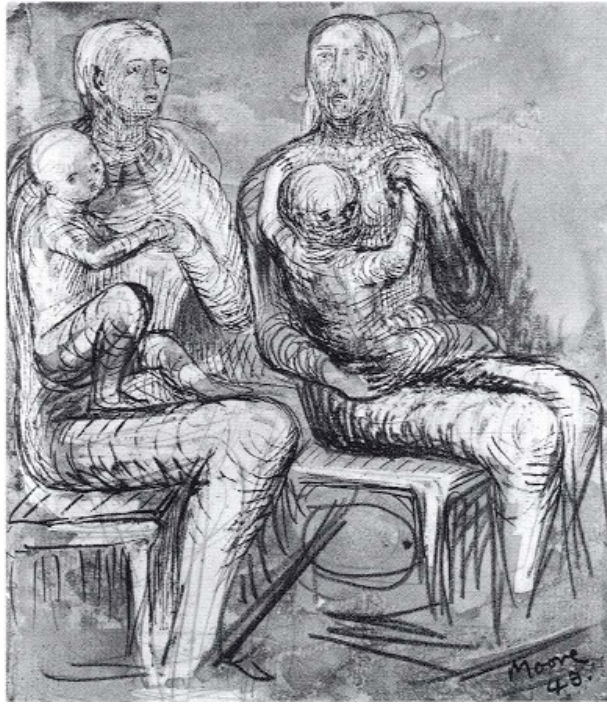


Fig.54 *Madonna and Child*, 1943, HMF2179



Fig.55 *Madonna and Child Studies*, 1943, HMF2181a



Fig.56 *Madonna and Child*, 1943, HMF2183



Fig.57 *Madonna and Child*, 1943, LH215

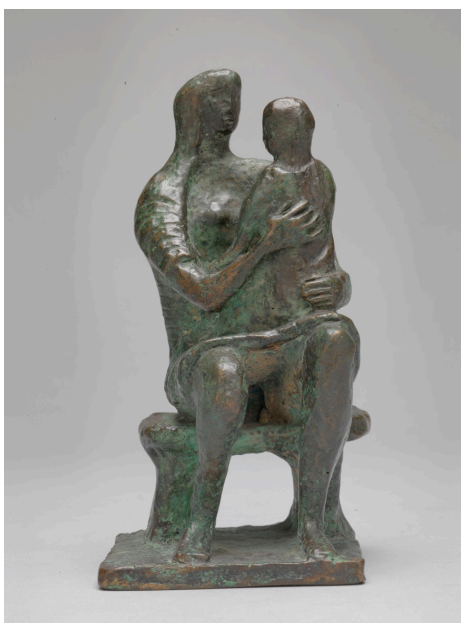


Fig.58 *Madonna and Child*, 1943, LH216



Fig.59 *Madonna and Child Studies*, 1943, HMF2181





Fig.60 Donatello, *Virgin and Child*, 1455-1460



Fig.61 Masaccio, *The Virgin and Child*, 1426



Fig.62 Leonardo da Vinci, *Madonna and Child with Flowers (Benois Madonna)*, 1478



Fig.63 *Tomb of Lionel, Lord Welles and his wife, Cecilia, 1461*



Fig.64 *Madonna and Child, 1943-44 (detail)*



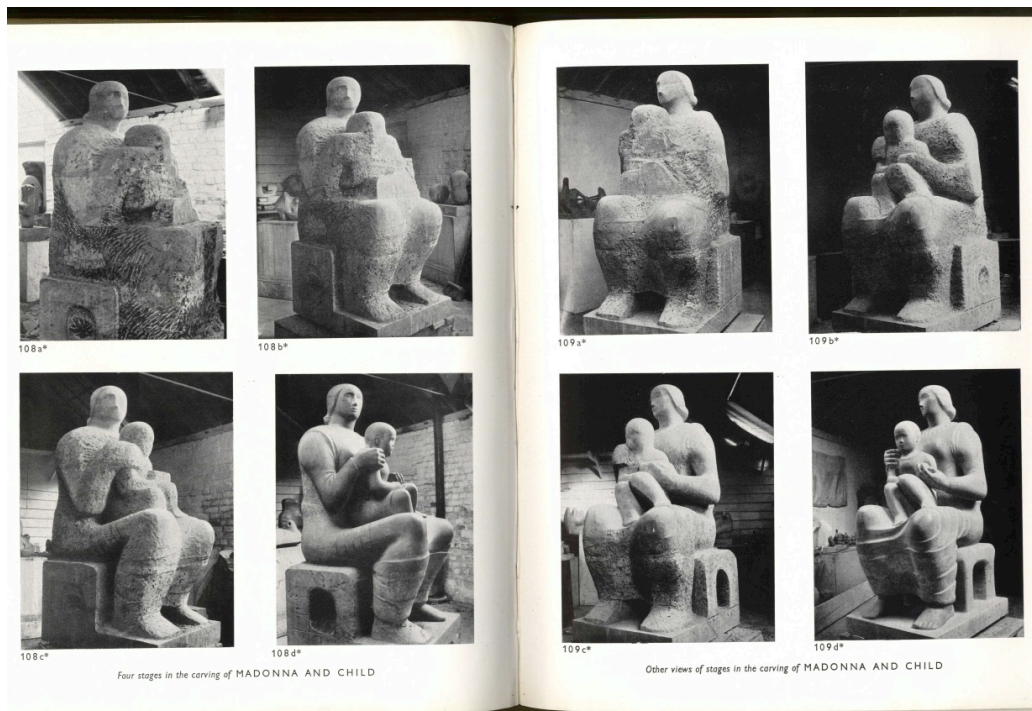


Fig.65 Double page spread from *Henry Moore: Sculpture and Drawings*, 1944

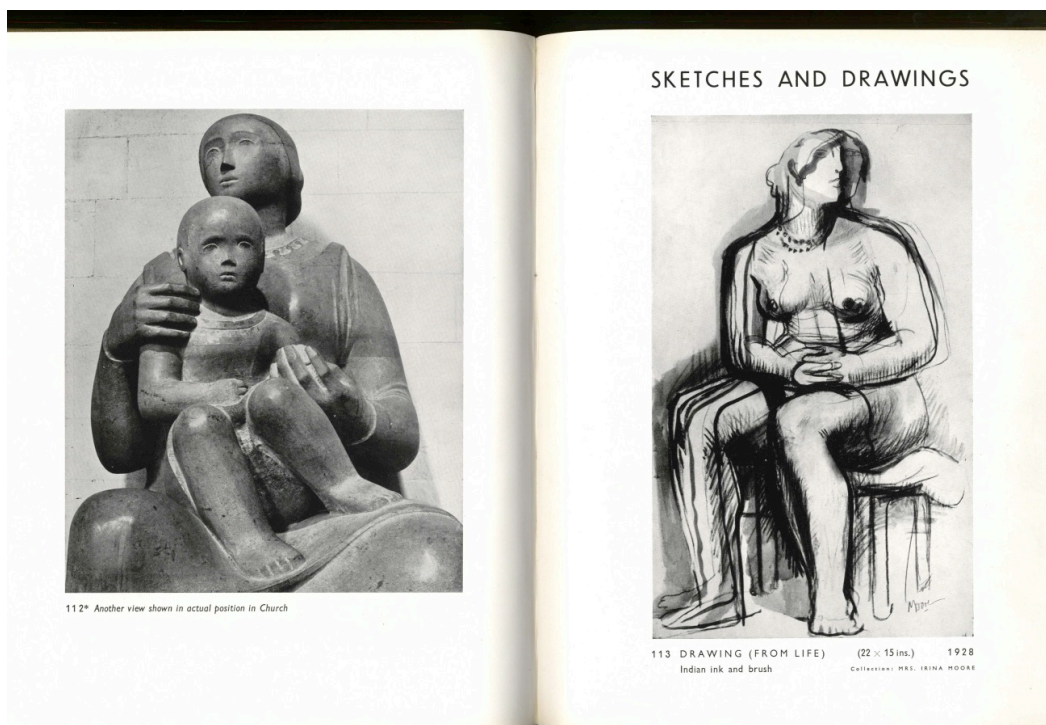


Fig.66 Double page spread from *Henry Moore: Sculpture and Drawings*, 1944



Figs.67 and 68 Contact sheet photographs by Lee Miller of Moore studio c.1943



Fig.69 *Family*, 1935, LH161a



Fig.70 *Mother and Child*, 1936, LH165





Fig. 71 *Mother and Child*, 1938, LH194



Fig.72 *Head of a Woman*, 1926, LH36

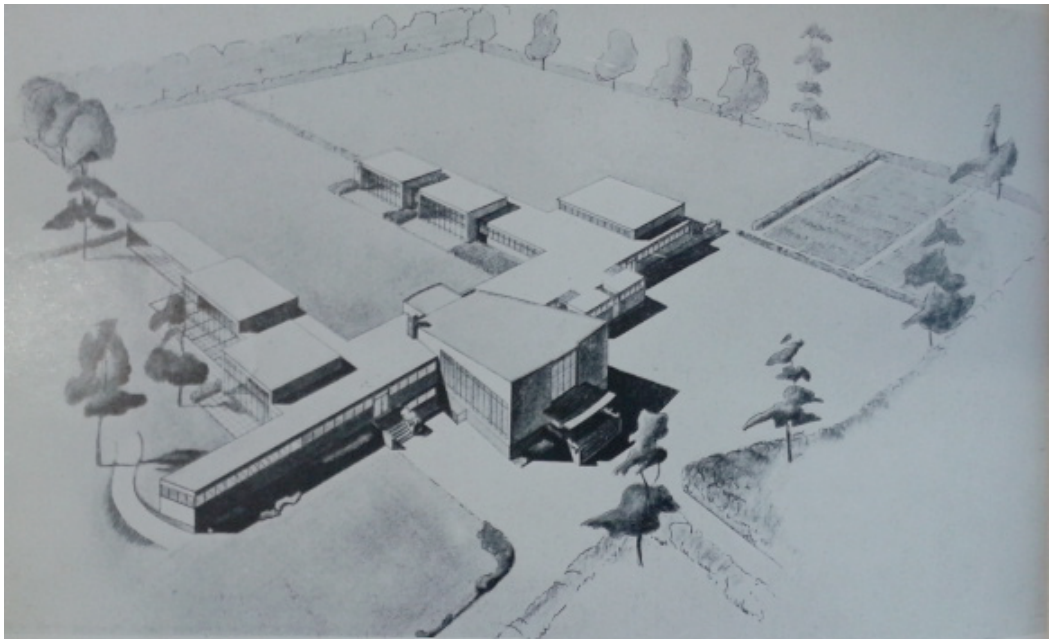


Fig.73 Impington Village College (labelled 'Project for a School at Papworth'), 1937

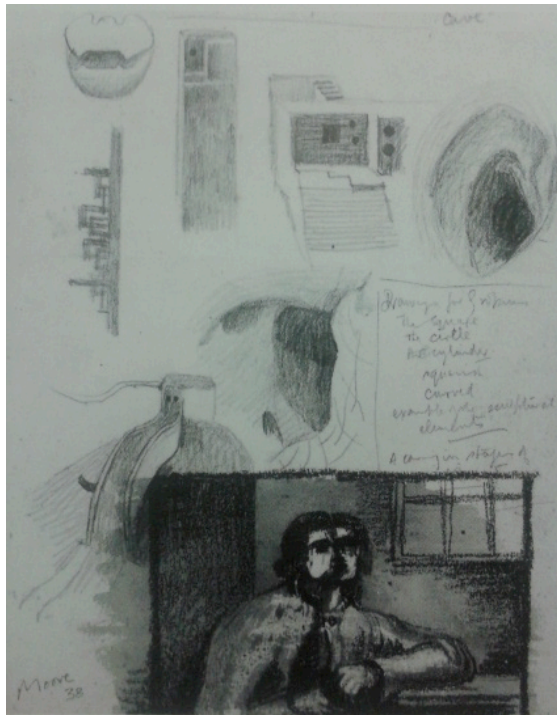


Fig.74 Drawing for Sculpture with Inset Drawing: Woman by a Window, 1937, HMF1390

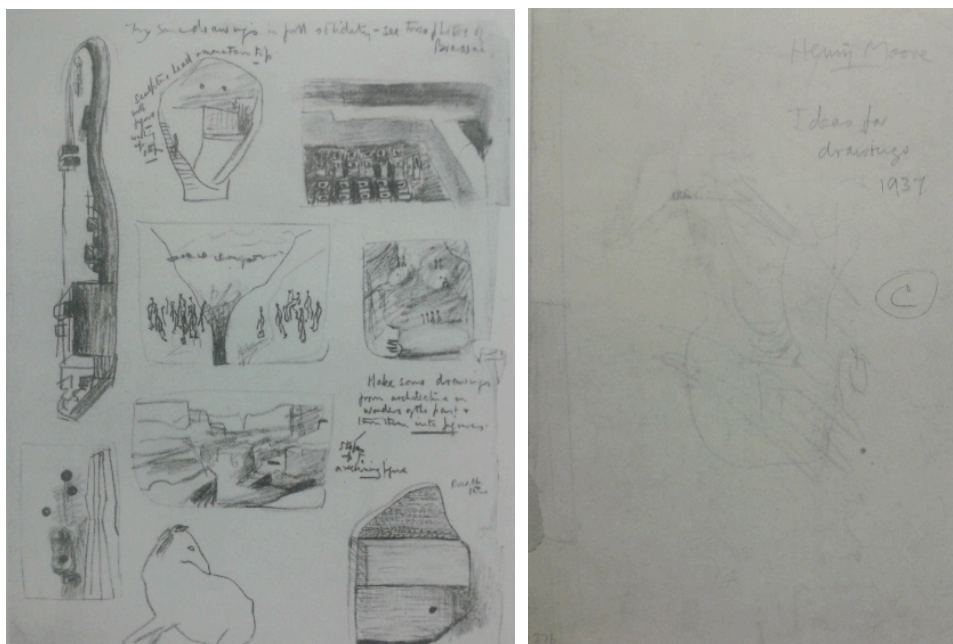


Fig.75 Ideas for Drawing Subjects, 1937, HMF1365

Fig.76 Idea for Upright Figure, 1937, HMF1344 verso





Fig.77 *Sculpture in a Setting*, 1937, HMF1318

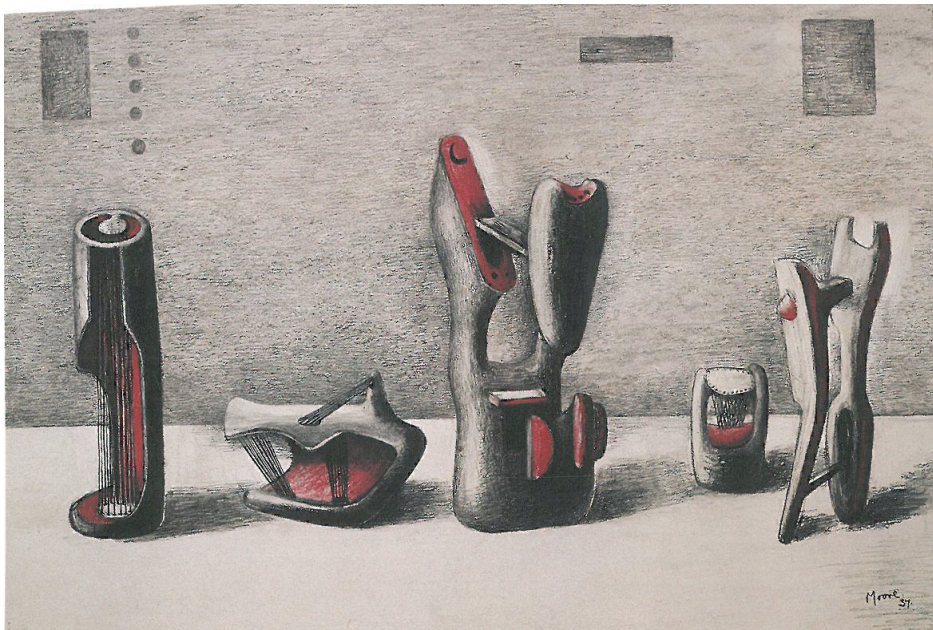


Fig.78 *Five Figures in a Setting*, 1937, HMF1319



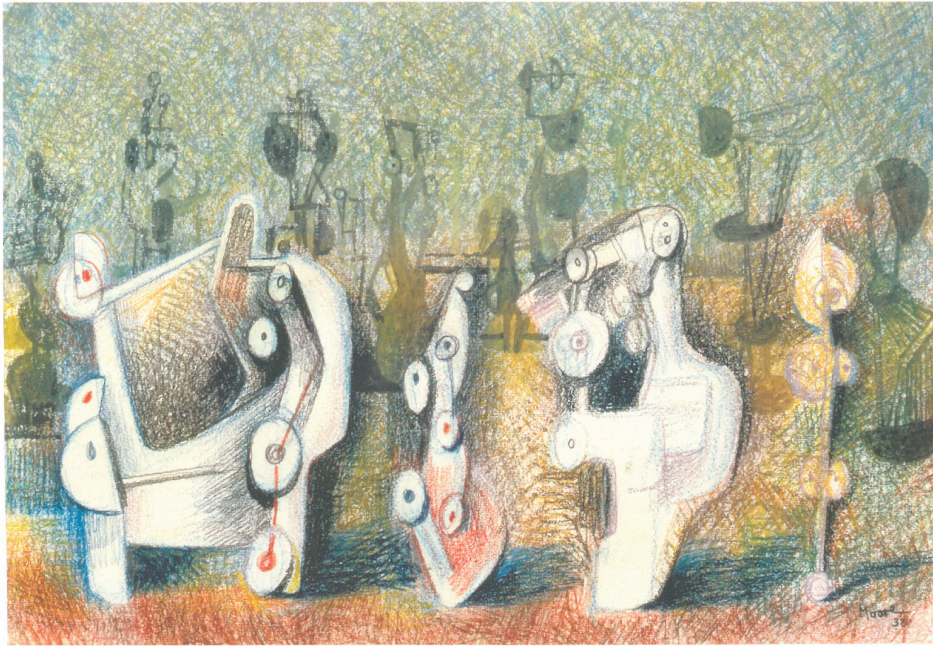


Fig.79 Mechanisms, 1938, HMF1367



Fig.80 Crowd Looking at a Tied-Up Object, 1942, HMF2064





Fig.81 *Three Family Groups*, c.1943-44, HMF2193

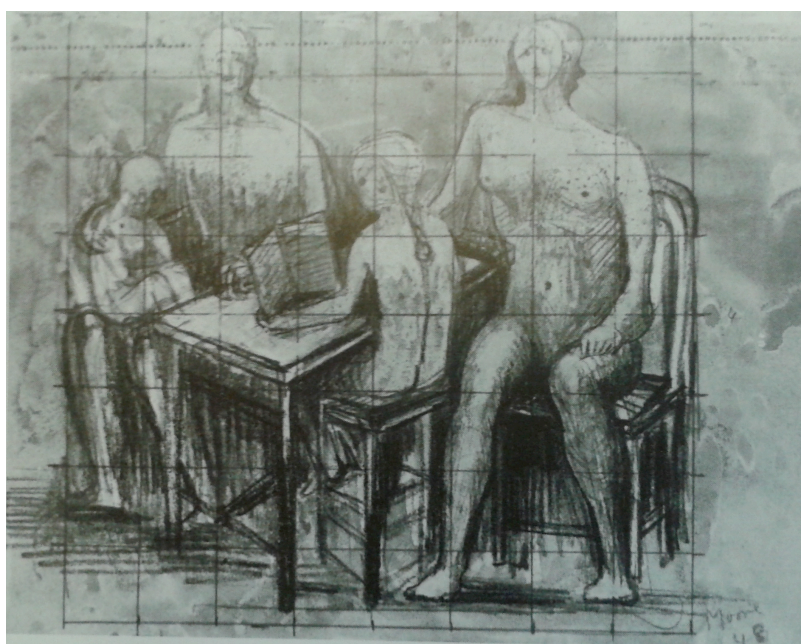


Fig.82 *Family Group*, c.1943-44, HMF2195





Fig.83 *Four Family Groups*, c.1943-44, HMF2196



Fig.84 *Family Groups*, c.1943-44, HMF2197



Fig.85 *Four Family Groups*, c.1943-44, HMF2199



Fig.86 *Two Women and Children*, c.1943-44, HMF220





Fig.87 *Family Groups and Madonna and Child*, c.1943-44, HMF2202



Fig.88 *Two Family Groups*, c.1943-44, HMF2203



Fig.89 *Family Groups*, c.1943-44, HMF2211



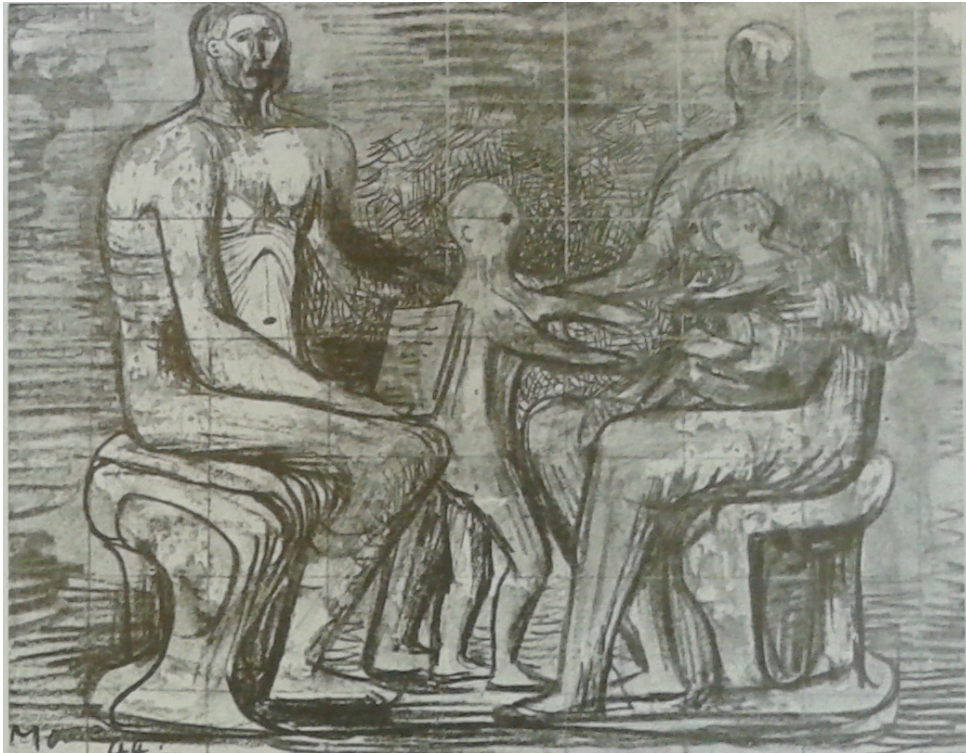


Fig.90 *Family Groups*, c.1943-44, HMF221



Fig.91 *Family Groups*, c.1943-44, HMF2213



Fig.92 *Family Group*, dated 1945, HMF2329





Fig.93 *Family Group Maquette*, (Scale model for Barclay School *Family Group*), 1945 LH239



Fig.94 *Family Group Maquette*, (Scale model for Harlow *Family Group*), 1944, LH227



Fig.95 *Reclining Figure: Festival*, 1951, LH



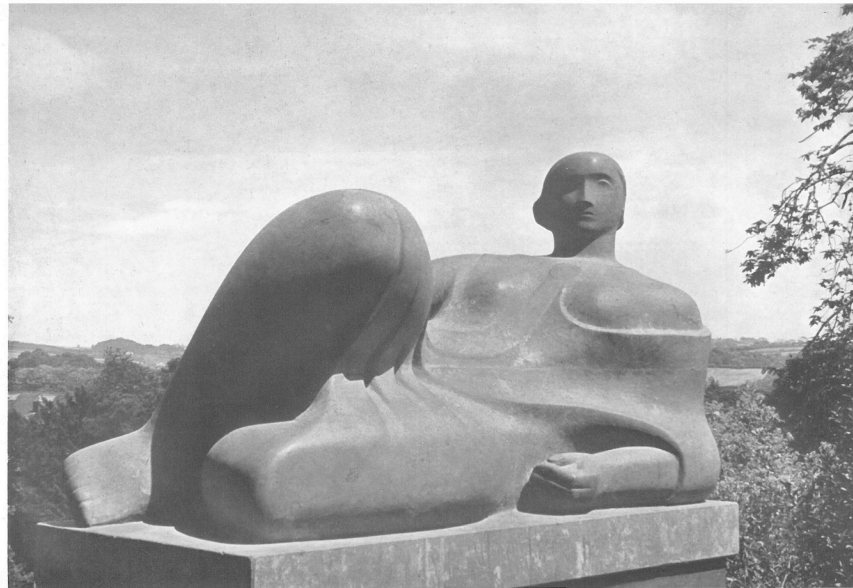
Fig.96 *Family Group Maquette* (Second scale model for Barclay School *Family Group*), 1944, LH259



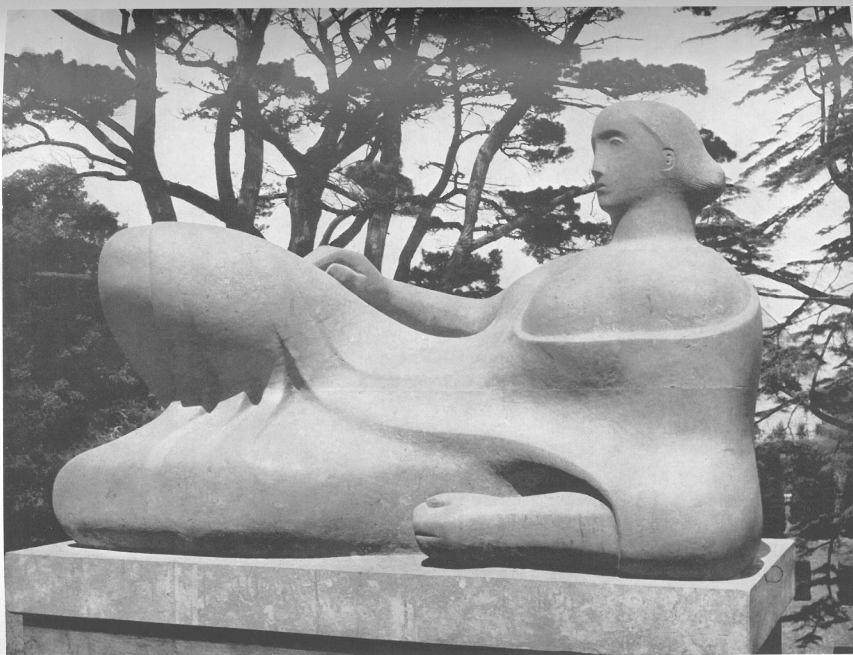
Fig.97 *Family Group Maquette*, 1946, LH259



Fig.98 *Family Group Maquette*, 1946, LH265



262 L.56 in. 1945-6



262



Fig.99 *Memorial Figure*, 1945-46, LH262





Fig.100 *Reclining Figure*, 1945-46, LH263



Fig.101 *Memorial Figure*, 1945-46, LH262





Fig.102 *Memorial Figure*, 1945-46, LH262



Fig.103 Dedication carved into the plinth for *Memorial Figure*, 1945-46, LH262





1b *In situ* at Barclay School, Stevenage, Herts.



1c *In situ* at Barclay School, Stevenage, Herts.



Fig.104 *Family Group*, 1948-49, LH269



Fig.105 *Family Group*, 1948-49, LH269



Fig.106 *Family Group* in situ at the Barclay School, 2012



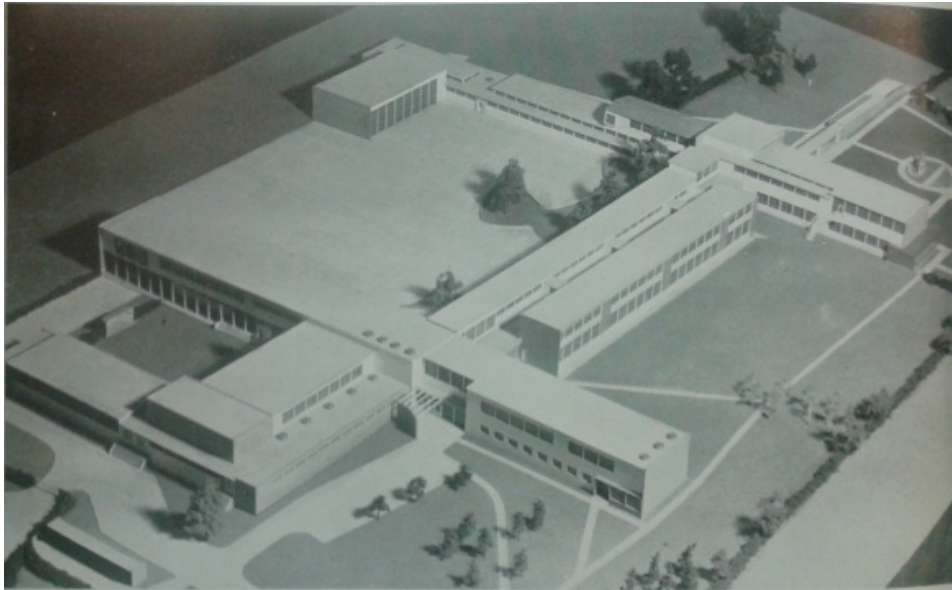


Fig.107 Architectural model of the Barclay School, Stevenage



Fig.108 *Atom Piece/Nuclear Energy*, 1964-66, LH526



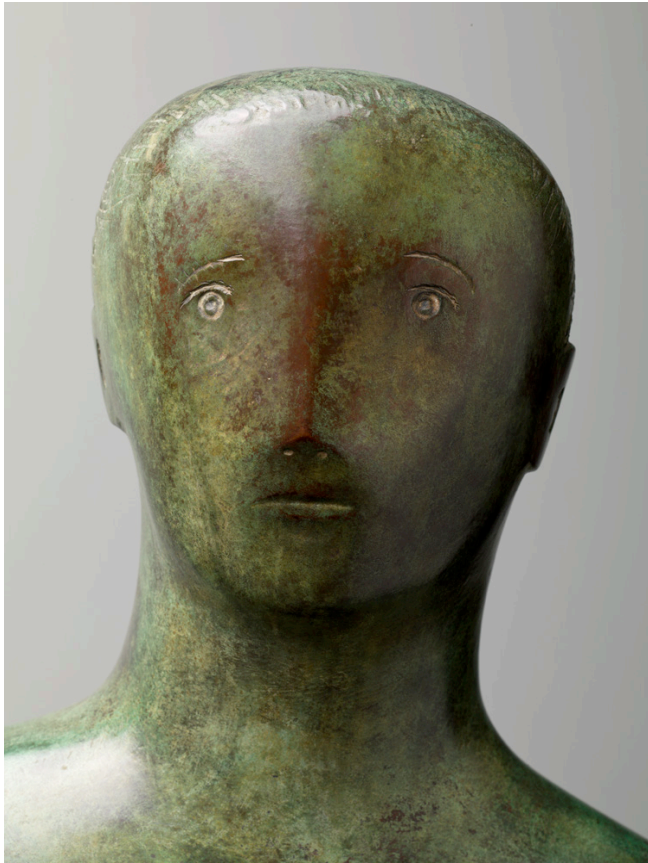


Fig.109 Detail from *Family Group*, 1948-49, LH269



Fig.110 Photograph from the *Daily Express*, 26 September 1950



Fig. 111 Ideas for Sculpture: Studies for 'Two Forms' and 'Carving', 1934-35, HMF1135r

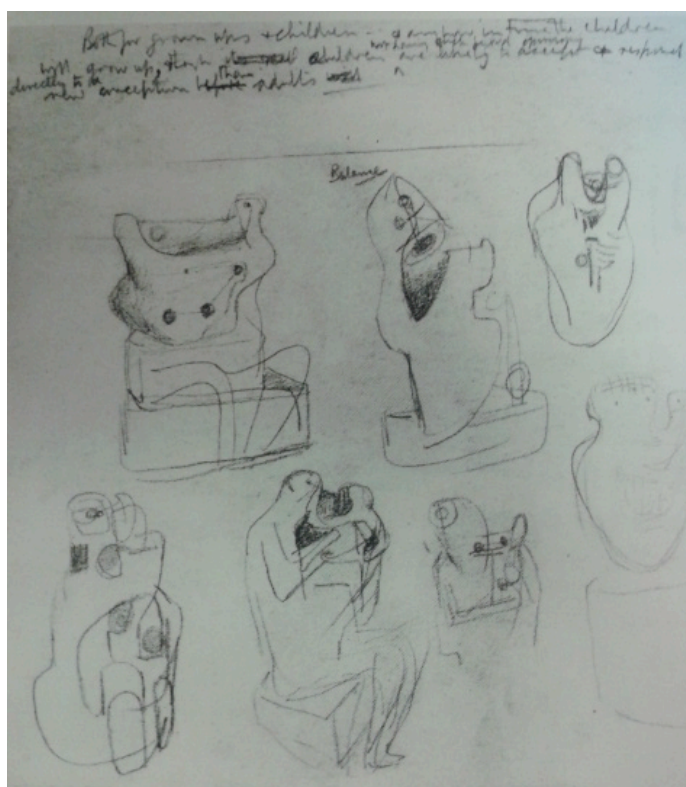


Fig.112 Ideas for Sculpture: Study for 'Mother and Child' Sculpture, 1934-35, HMF1135v

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Throughout the thesis I have referred to Moore's drawings and sculptures by way of the catalogue raisonnés of Moore's work compiled and published by the Henry Moore Foundation. For the purpose of identifying works I will refer only to catalogue numbers which have remained consistent though the contents of various editions of the catalogues have changed. For the purpose of referencing works, it is best to refer to the most recent volumes, as listed below. Other volumes used are referenced in the main bibliography

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